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Mores catholici



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*W. Bayly*

# Mores Catholici:

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.  
[Kenelm H. Digby.]

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BOOK II.

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# MORES CATHOLICI;

OR,

## AGES OF FAITH.

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### THE SECOND BOOK.

#### CHAP. I.

RISING to that second period of the heavenly strain, which said the “meek are blessed,” a view at once so lovely and extensive in range of gracious objects presents itself, when we turn to mark how far this can be illustrated and verified in the annals of Christian history, that we seem then only beginning to enjoy the sweet consequence of meditating on the spirit and ways of faithful times. Still as we continue to ascend this delicious mountain, at every stage we shall find the air which gently smites our temples embalmed with some new fragrance, and at our feet we shall mark some new odoriferous and exquisitely painted flower which adorns the path of innocence; we shall be saluted with some new ravishing prospect which for a moment will make us forget the past, though it seem only to feed and strengthen that infinite desire which prompts us to press forward to enjoy other, and perhaps higher splendours, the splendours of the saints, which are reserved to bless even those eyes that are unworthy to behold the height of heaven. The first direction which our thoughts naturally take is towards the mild courtesy which characterised the manners of the middle ages

so eminently, that even the least instructed are accustomed to consider them as synonymous with gracious manners, to which meekness gave the captivating charm. All works which represent the days of chivalry have occasion to be often conversant with this theme ; but it was from the schools of holy men that the spirit of grace and harmony descended to shed a soft lustre on the ways of secular life ; for as St. Augustin says, it is piety which leads to the second beatitude, “ Beati mites \*.” A great poet of antiquity well distinguished between urbanity and the virtue which alone makes it precious ; “ I would labour in dressing the garden of the Graces, for they give delight, but men are good and wise by means of the divine assistance.”

————— Ἀγαθοὶ δὲ  
Καὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ δαίμον' ἄνδρες  
'Εγένοντ' †.

“ Urbanity when separated from religious charity, is rather the law of war than a treaty of peace between men.” This is what Manzoni says †. Without that charity a man may appear courteous at times, but as St. Bernard said of Peter Abailard, he will be unlike himself—externally a John, and within a Herod §. Even his apparent kindness will be sometimes exercised with a view to wound more deeply. Don Alonzo the wise, king of Naples, hearing one day a certain man praising his enemy, “ Remark,” said he, “ the artifice of the man, and you will see that his praises are only for the purpose of doing him more injury.” And such was the fact, for he pretended to approve of his designs during six months, in order that afterwards people might be more disposed to give credit to the calumnies which he

\* De Serm. Dom. in Monte.

† Pindar, Olymp. IX.

‡ Osservazioni sulla Morale Cattolica, 56.

§ Epist. cxcii.

was preparing against him. Urbanity in the world seems only a kind of symbol to satisfy those who would have nothing to say in first accosting each other but words like those with which Louis XI. approached the duke of Burgundy, "*Mon frère m'assurez vous ? mon frère m'assurez vous ?*" The love of God and the direction of the intention to his glory is the only source of real and sincere and lasting courtesy. Divine love beholds Jesus in the person of the lowliest brother, and, therefore, prompts a thousand kind, generous, and amiable actions, to serve, benefit, and please others, such as men, unvisited from on high, would have been discouraged from performing by many obvious earthly reflections and interests, which are never directed by any higher motive than that of personal and selfish benefit, even when they seek to gain respect and love. It is very curious to observe, how the religion of Catholic Christians tended to form the character, not only of a courteous and humble gentleman, but also to dictate actions of that kind of generosity which seems so amiable in young persons of noble, open, and warm hearts. For it taught men to be generous and liberal, not indeed through vanity and the desire of passing for a person of a higher order, but for Christ's sake, reminding them that it was better to give than to receive; and that it was often as great charity to be liberal to humble persons as to give alms to the poor. The great apostle of the nations furnishes a beautiful example in point when writing to Philemon concerning his poor servant Onesimus, he says, "If he hath wronged thee or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it." Moreover the eye of faith has regard to the ineffable mysteries of the Christian altar, of which every one may be a partaker; and the thought of this seems to entitle the very persons of men to somewhat of veneration. The

meek courtesy and loving address of holy men is so invariable an attendant upon sanctity, that the Church at the second vespers of a Confessor Pontiff sings the Psalm which begins with "Memento Domine David et omnis mansuetudinis ejus," words which had also formed part of the introit for the day. The kindness and expressions of affection with which a stranger is received by those who live a heavenly life, might be described in the words of Dante, where he says of one spirit which approached him in such guise:

So bright, that in my thought I said : The love  
Which this betokens me, admits no doubt \*.

Such was the greeting that St. Paul gave to St. Anthony when he received him into his cell in the desert, when there followed even a gentle strife, each contending who should give the other greater honour. Such too is the greeting which one is always sure to receive from a man of the interior life on entering his humble dwelling. In the chapels of Vallombrosa, the affability of its holy eremites is attested on their tombs. May it be allowed me to mention an instance of the courtesy of religious men which occurred to me on a journey through the forests of Lucerne. Perhaps so lowly an instance will best accord with the present argument. It is one of those many humble themes which rest in the memory as if to mock the ambition of elevated musings. One evening then, arriving at the little ancient town of Sursee, I took a walk outside the wall, and finding a convent of Capuchins on the way side, I went into the church. Two old friars with long white beards were at their devotions. When it struck eight it seemed a signal to them to withdraw, but as they rose up and saw me kneeling near the door, one of them returned and resumed his position. After a while he again rose and whispered to a servant who

\* Parad. XIX.

knelt by his side. It was not till I rose to leave the church that the brother advanced with the keys to lock the doors ; for so great was their delicacy that they would rather abate a little of their rule than appear to act discourteously to an obscure and youthful stranger. Such were those barefooted meek ones, who sought God's friendship in the cord \*. Meekness must follow the humility which we have seen was the spirit of religious men ; for the doctrine taught was this " non nocet, si omnibus te supponas : nocet autem plurimum, si vel uni te præponas † ;" and it was even observed by writers of these ages, that the positive precepts of religion inspire politeness. Thus, speaking of our Lord's rule for those invited to a feast, John of Salisbury says, " Although this might seem rather the edict of religion than of civility, yet, ' ego religionis formam à civilitate non divido, cum nihil civilius sit quam cultui virtutis insistere ‡.' " St. Boniface, in his *Mirror of Novices*, gives them instruction in politeness at table, which comprises every thing that would now be desired to qualify men for the most refined society. It is curious to find him noticing a thousand vulgarities which have been infused into the manners of France by the sophists, and which shock every well bred stranger, rendering the connection between a religious education and real good manners very striking. Men of this world are so full of all unkindness, so steeled in proud selfishness and mistrust, that they cannot believe the gentle courtesy of monks and holy persons of the interior life to be sincere. They cannot believe that these men of God should, as they profess to do, really feel joy in serving a stranger, concern at not being able instantly to relieve each of his slightest wants, that they should really think them-

\* Dante, *Parad.* XII.† *De Imit.* lib. I. 7.‡ *De Nugis Curialium*, lib. VIII. c. ix.

selves honoured by receiving him into their poor cell, and afflicted at the thought of his going away: all this seems to them as something hollow, affected, ridiculous, hateful, “*abominatio est superbis, humilitas*,” says St. Bonaventura. Alas, for them who know not what it is to love men in and for Jesus! “And why do you suppose,” asks the Father guardian of Franciscans at La Flèche, in his *Paradise of the Seraphic Religion of St. Francis*,—“Why do you suppose are our friars so gracious and gentle to every one who approaches them? Do you imagine that it is in order that they may conciliate their friendship, and take advantage of their good opinion, like those money-catchers whose kindness lasts so long as the good fortune of those whose purses they envy? No; but it is the property of these sublime souls to live always contented, and this interior joy of their conscience cannot but break forth outwardly, since it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh\*.” The beautiful passage in the *Morals of St. Gregory*, which condemns the false civility of the world, and commends the gracious simplicity of the just, comes in part of the office which every man separate to the Church recites in due course. “The wisdom of the world,” it says, “teaches to conceal the heart by machinations, to veil one’s sense with words, to shew as true what is false, and to prove false what is true, to love under a palliated name the wickedness of duplicity, for perversity of mind is called urbanity. Whereas, on the contrary, the wisdom of the just is to feign nothing, to be open in words, to love what is true, and to avoid all falsehood; but this simplicity of the just is derided by the wise of this world, who despise innocence and truth†;” and thus that sweet benignity,

\* *Le Sacré Mont d’Olivet*, par. F. Elzeare l’Archer. Paris, 1614.

† *Lib. X. cap. XVI. in Job xii.*



soft as young down, which encompasses the saintly, and even heroic character, loses that title of respect "Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud." As when one traverses the Campagna of Rome, and on some sudden fear hastens to a house which seems to offer shelter, but finds it desert, empty, shut up, or open only through decay, one feels then that the desolation is more horrible and fearful to the imagination than the wildness of the waste where there is no such mockery of walls, so does the heart sink within one at the sound and shew of that hollow courtesy which smiles at a distance, but which on approach suffers all to be barred and silent. But such were not religious manners in ages of faith, and warmth of affection was not excluded, but expressed by gracious manners. The description which Pliny gives of Fuscus Salinator applies to them. "Puer simplicitate, comitate juvenis, senex gravitate \*." The Catholic religion, by enabling men to live without being slaves to the world, facilitated the acquisition of this youthful grace. The chorus says to Trugœus in the old play, that if he could finish his labours he would be seen to lay aside all his former harsh manners, and he would appear gentle.

Καὶ πολὺ νεώτερον, ἀπ-  
αλλαγέντα πραγμάτων

"Man," as Leo the Great says, "created in the image of God was to be an imitator of his Author, and this is the natural dignity of our race, if there should shine in us, as if in a certain mirror, the form of divine benignity." The social state in the middle ages had a degree of refinement from the influence of religion which, at the time, delighted and surprised reflecting men. Thus Petrarch describes his arrival at Cologne on the vigil of St. John the Baptist, and

\* Epist. VI. 26.

says, "I was astonished to observe in that barbarous land such civility, such a beauty of buildings, such gravity in the men, and such elegance in the matrons\*." The greatest attention was even paid among the lower classes to the observances of civility, as the regulations of their own society shew; for in the fourteenth century in France, if a mason uttered an uncivil word, he paid a fine of ten farthings to the person he had offended. But the engaging manners of the poor proceeded from a very different principle from the fear of punishment, as may still, indeed, be seen in those happy Catholic cantons of Switzerland and the Tyrol, of Styria and Carinthia, where the children come forth to kiss their little hands to the stranger, the youths receive him as a brother, and lead him to the deepest pool, or to the wildest path that promises the sport most dear to them; the old men, like Homeric fathers mild, pass him by with smiles and looks of affection; the matrons invoke the adorable name of the Saviour to bless him, and where the form of greeting with all is to say, "Praised be Jesus Christ," that the sweet pledge of everlasting union may be returned in the answer, "for ever." Ah! it is here that God, through the meekness of his children, gives joy to the heart of youth. What traveller in Italy has not been struck with the meekness and benignity of the holy men who receive strangers to monastic hospitality! Dante, in Paradise, remembers

———— The bright courtesy  
Of friar Thomas and his goodly lore †.

For one, at least, I can never omit an occasion to praise those venerable priests in the peaceful cloisters of Camaldoli, who with the noble air and imposing majesty of princes, waited like humble domestics upon me unworthy, disdaining no kind of servile

\* Epist. iv.

† Cant. XII.

office ; men who knew how to unite the utmost dignity with the utmost grace, so that whom I venerated as angels I began to love as brothers ; men of such rare benignity, so disinterested, so unearthly, that to one who before had friends they could give a new idea of friendship ; men in short, who had learned to believe with Pope St. Leo the Great, that “ the love of our neighbour is the love of God \*.” To observe their habit one would have supposed them ancient sages from the groves of Plato, but the sweetness and heavenly calm of their countenances, proclaimed that they were of the school of Christ. Ah ! since it cannot be given me to recompense them, may I be allowed to leave this frail memorial of their goodness, and to satisfy the demand of my heart by testifying what an impression it wrought there. To recompense them is the privilege only of the Author of benignity, of the Source and Inspirer of love. I took leave of them with sighs, but it was only for myself, with wishes as fruitless that I could have added to their happiness ; but the brief contingencies of the mortal course could not affect those who moved already in another sphere of being—they were already possessors of that peace which is to last for ever—“ *justi autem in perpetuum vivent et apud Dominum est merces eorum.*” The Church, in the most imposing of her ceremonies, and in the person of her supreme pontiff, takes occasion to express this divine charity. The holy father on creating a new cardinal, before the solemn and august assembly of the sacred college, throws aside, as it were, his dignity, receives him in open arms, and twice bestows the kiss of peace. Each venerable brother then salutes him with the same marks of tenderness. Thus even in the most stately and formal parts of her ritual, there is some development of the loving principle, some sweet

\* Serm. ix. de Jejun.

manifestation of charity, of a friendship that is to be eternal. For the general instruction of her children, the precepts and manners of the Church were express and uniform. The sweet evening hymn, in the little office that was so dear to men in the middle ages, that all the efforts of art were unceasingly employed in multiplying beauteous copies, in addressing her, who, above all, was meek, made equal account of meekness and of purity :

*Mites fac et castos.*

“ O my soul,” cries Bellarmin, “ if thou art a garden of the celestial Husbandman, take heed lest thorns should be found in thee ; but let there be the tree of charity, and the lily of chastity, and the violet of humility.” Behold the model in all ages held up to the faithful. Men will speak vain things, and use violence, and study deceits all the day long, and speak great things against them, and challenge them to argument—but they are to remember him who “ as a deaf man, heard not ; and was as a dumb man, not opening his mouth ; who became as one that heareth not, and that hath no reproofs in his mouth \*.” St. Anselm, in his sublime Meditations, prays to God that he would take away obstinacy from his sentiments, and rudeness from his manners †.

“ Behold what is meek courtesy,” says St. Ambrose. “ The superior comes to visit the inferior, that the inferior may be assisted : Mary to Elizabeth—Christ to John ‡.” Behold another divine example. St. Jerome remarks, that the other Evangelists, through respect for St. Matthew, are unwilling to call him by the vulgar name of his profession, but use a word of double sense, Levi ; whereas, St. Matthew names himself at once the Publican ; shewing his

\* Psalm xxxvii.

† Medit. cap. I. § 2.

‡ Hom. in Luc. cap. I.

readers that no one should despair of salvation, if he be converted to better things \*. St. Jerome gives a beautiful instance of Christian courtesy towards the great. "No one," he says, "ever surpassed Paula in goodness towards all the world; no one could be more gentle and kind to humble inferiors. She never sought the society of the great; but whenever she found herself with them, she was never observed to blame with a severity that might have seemed out of place those who sought the glory and perishable honour of this life. In every thing she knew how to preserve a just moderation †." The same courtesy, from the same principle of charity, was inculcated by St. Francis. "If a friar," says one of that meek order, "should find himself at the table of some prince, or great lord, and should perceive the sweet odour with which the cloth and napkins are perfumed, he ought not to shew his contempt for such luxury, but he should make it the subject of internal contemplation. We teach our scholars, on such occasions, to take all from the hand of God, and to judge all in good part, according to the command of our glorious father, St. Francis; who, in his rule, warns us, that, although we be poor and austere in our lives, we must not judge evil of men in the world, who live delicately, and feast well; for who knows, if, under these purple habits, there may not be concealed hair shirts and sackcloth. Was not that the custom of the king St. Louis, and of many other princes ‡?" "A man should endeavour to gain the minds of others, and to render himself agreeable and amiable in all the occasions when it is his duty to instruct, to exhort, and to correct. No necessity will ever justify rudeness or bitterness." This is what St. Basil says in his Epistle to St. Gregory Nazianzen. "The

\* St. Hieron. Hom. lib. I. Com. in Matt. cap. ix.

† Epist. ad Eustoch.

‡ F. Elzeare l'Archer, Le Sacré Mont d'Olivet, p. 648.

intention of afflicting a man is always a sin. The most lawful action, the exercise of the most incontrovertible right, becomes a sin, when directed to this horrible end. It is with this view," continues Manzoni, "that the Catholic Church lays down her morality \*." What a contrast, then, was here, to the spirit of that people among the ancients, who in many respects approached nearer to the discipline and character of our ancestors than any other! For at Sparta the young were expressly taught to impart a peculiar sharpness and brilliancy to their sayings; and in later life, the public manners prescribed ridicule, the being able to endure which was considered the mark of a Lacedæmonian spirit; though, if any person took it ill, and asked his antagonist to desist, (and he would suffer much before he would avail himself of such a privilege,) the other was forced to comply. That the power of ridicule was not undervalued, may be inferred from the circumstance, that in the code of Charondas public ridicule was assigned as the penalty of the adulterer and busy-body, the sycophant and coward†. It is hard, therefore, to conceive any thing more opposed to the Christian manners in ages of faith, than the discipline which encouraged such a spirit; which, though it may sometimes assume a form of gentle courtesy, when it is used in loving mood, to chace away black humours, yet oftener it doth indicate "harsh rage, defect of manners, want of government, pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain."

"The servant of Christ," says St. Chrysostom, "is to be called rather from the mildness of his manners than by the name given to him by his parents." And St. Ambrose shewed the moral benefit which resulted, by observing, that, "a mild man is

\* Osservazioni sulla Morale Cattolica.

† Diod. XII. 12.



a physician of the heart \*.” “Would not the true philosophic nature possess mildness?” asks the disputant in Plato †. It was found so in after ages; for the utmost meekness appeared in all the discourses of the clergy, distinguishing their eloquence from that which Plato ascribes to the democratic orator, “who says the most severe and acrimonious things; and when speaking from the tribune—*βομβεῖ τε καὶ οὐκ ἀνέχεται τοῦ ἄλλα λέγοντος ‡.*” The courtesy of the Christian writers, uniting the most uncompromising firmness with delicate and condescending language is most remarkable. For instance, St. Jerome thus writes to Læta: “Witness the family of your illustrious father; a man, without doubt, to be commended, for the nobleness of his sentiments, and for his great knowledge on every subject; but, unhappily, still imbued with the errors of Paganism §.” St. Augustin, in his correspondence with the pagan people of Madaura, calls them his relations and his brethren: “*fratres mei, et parentes mei ||.*” And the letters of St. Basil to Libanius the Sophist, present a still more striking instance of the courtesy and gentleness with which a doctor, full of Christian zeal, would address a Pagan. This spirit is evinced, also, by the chivalrous writers of the middle age. In Gyron le Courtoys, Phebus remains with a certain Payen, named Harsaan, of whom the romance says, “*Il estoit moult gentil homme en la loy Payenne \*\*.*” Tasso commends, in glowing terms, the constancy and valour of Argantes, an Infidel ††: and he even goes so far as to acknowledge the virtues of Emireno, a false Armenian,

That, in his youth, from Christ's true faith and light,  
To the blind lore of Paganism did slide ‡‡.

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\* Epist. lib. X. 82.

† De Repub. VIII.

|| Epist. 232.

†† Cap. xix. 1.

‡ De Repub. III.

§ Epist. ad Lætam.

\*\* F. ccxlviii.

‡‡ xvii. 32.

A beautiful instance of this ancient Christian courtesy, united with fervent zeal, combining the gentleness and innocence of the evangelical spirit with the polished refinement of the Platonic dialogue, and with a little of the Socratic irony, is furnished by Manzoni in his reply\* to the objections advanced by Sismondi against Catholic morals, in his History of the Italian Republics.

It may be remarked, that the development of the courteous principle was, in many respects, similar even to the form of more recent manners. Thus in the sixth and seventh centuries, it was common to give the title of Abbot to any venerable or learned priest. Pope Adrian thus styles Angilbert, who was but a simple chaplain of the king's chapel; and Cassien applies it to many solitaries, who never had any command over a community. As it was become the custom of the Romans to give certain titles of honour to Bishops, such as the pious, or the blessed, or holy,—the delicate courtesy of the fathers, which we have spoken of, induced them to apply these even to men whom they had to condemn. In the Conference of Carthage, St. Augustin speaks of the holy Emeritus, and the holy Petilien, although these were Donatists. An author had often occasion to evince the same modesty as a knight of chivalry. Thus Suger, in his work on the Gestes of Louis VII., though he describes minutely the events of his time, says not a word respecting his own administration as Regent, nor the choice made of him to govern the kingdom, such was his modesty in not publishing his own great merit and services. And where merit had raised persons of low and obscure birth, like this celebrated Abbot, the meek sincerity inspired by religion must have preserved their manners from all that offensive vanity which would otherwise have so in-

\* Osservazioni sulla morale Cattolica.

evitably attended their sudden elevation. Willegisus, Archbishop of Mayence, being son of a carpenter, had wheels painted in all the chambers of his house, with an inscription, reminding him of his origin. Pope Urban, being son of a shoe-maker, decorated the churches of Troyes with paintings of his father's stall; and Cardinal Maicus, in the time of Paul II. having been a shepherd's son, had painted a lamb, with a book on its head, to shew his origin and his profession\*. Suger, when Regent of France, repeatedly alludes to his own origin†, and says: "Representing to myself in what manner the strong hand of God raised me poor from the dunghill, and made me to sit with the princes of the Church and of the kingdom, in what manner he hath exalted unworthy me‡." John of Salisbury, in the prologue to his great work "*De Nugis Curialium*," takes occasion to speak of himself as "a plebeian man." Indeed, St. Anselm says, that a man really humble seeks the lowest place with as much eagerness as a proud man seeks the highest: of which Palladius gives an example in the blessed Pasuntius, who, finding himself held in great honour, fled to unknown regions, and far-distant monasteries, dissembling his name, that there, as if a rude and new monk, he might discharge the lowest offices.

Isocrates, in his *Panegyric*, says, that philosophy forms the manners of men, and "makes them mild to one another§." But here we must distinguish: if it be the philosophy, or the love of God and truth, which saved men, and made saints, before the prophets and before Moses,—this may be true: if it be the philosophy of the proud schools of Athens, this is but an empty boast, not in the least degree borne out by what we know of the manners of the ancients;

\* Hier. Garimbert, I. 2. de Vit. Pont.

† Sug. Testam.

‡ Const. I.

§ Panegy. 50.

for to the men who came from those schools, as well as to the moderns who have lost the faith, we can only apply the phrase of Tacitus, "*Ex suo quisque ingenio mitius aut horridius*\*." There is no security.

To the meekness of saintly men in ages of faith, belonged an outward expression of gentleness and benignity, which one cannot pass over in silence. "The saints," says the blessed John of the Cross, "have a certain air of dignity, majesty, and sweetness, which draws the veneration of the whole world to them." This is what struck me when I came first to Camaldoli, on the eve of the exaltation of the holy cross ; for there, I unwilling was humbly waited upon by men, who had in their looks and air the majesty of princes : to portray them on canvass would have required the pencil of another Andrew Sacchi. It is recorded of St. Bernard, that he had an admirably sweet and gracious look, which proceeded rather from his "spirit than his flesh." The portrait of William of Wyckham, in the College which he founded at Oxford, is singularly expressive of meekness, intelligence, and sanctity. Indeed, on the monuments of these ages, we can seldom trace those countenances which now present themselves in every direction, bearing looks

Alien from heaven, with passions foul obscur'd.

They are such as rather might serve for angels, that would seem to say, with Beatrix to Dante, "I come from a place whither I desire to return, but love has conducted me here : " or like that spirit which appeared to Dante, who shewed "in look and gesture, seemly grace of reverent awe †."

The ancients seem to have had no models of this beauty of sanctity, notwithstanding their deep and

\* Hist. lib. I. 82.

† Purg. XII.

lovely conceptions of grace; as, in fact, there was nothing in their philosophy to correspond with it. Cicero says, that in the countenance of a public orator, there should be a modest expression mixed with acrimony\*. There is not a passage in all the most admired writings of their philosophers, which was capable of inspiring the sense which was expressed in these mild looks of Christian holiness. These looks are all derived from the Christian mysteries. No one who had not beheld the initiated, could ever have conceived the countenance of that deacon in Domenichino's painting of the communion of St. Jerome: that expression of deep, subdued, unaffected, unimpassioned piety, is exclusively to be found within the Catholic Church. At the first sight of that young priest who advances to the altar with joined palms and down-cast eyes, to sing mass, there are many present who cannot prevent their tears from bursting forth: it is a look of such profound humility and sweetness; such resignation and readiness to die for Christ: it is the countenance and air of a holy martyr. And remark here, that the least skilful artist in a catholic country, can give an idea of this expression, and that the noblest genius among the moderns, in no instance, has ever succeeded.

"There have been many in this holy order," says Father Elzear l'Archer, "who have converted great sinners merely by means of their manner and outward appearance. If I may speak of what I have myself seen, I can say with truth, that having been in company for twelve hours, three or four times, with a saint, whom all Italy holds for such; one, as Dante says, 'visibly written blessed in his looks,' I have learned more respecting the duties of my profession from marking his countenance, than if he had entertained me for three days with a continuous dis-

\* Ad Herennium, lib. III. 15.

course upon mystical theology. Every one who knows him, will confess with me, that he is a man rather of heaven than of the earth, and who converses more with God than with men ; and, nevertheless, he is of so sweet and agreeable a conversation, that he captivates every one. To see him when he is not performing his exercises, during which he appears as an angel of heaven, one would say that he was but an ordinary man, and nothing more than another : so well has he learned how to cultivate that holy cheerfulness and joyous modesty\*." Armed only with a crucifix and the looks of an angel, "severe in youthful beauty," St. Francis Regis stopped a troop of heretical soldiers, who were about to burst into a church, and prevented them from profaning it.

The writers of the middle age generally ascribe beauty to an internal excellence of the mind : thus Holinshed says of Henry VI. "His face was beautiful, in the which continually was resident the bountie of mind, with which he was inwardly endewed." "Where is now that beauty of countenance," asks St. Jerome, alluding to a young friend lately dead, "where that dignity of person, which, like a beautiful garment, clothed the beauty of the soul †?" In speculation, the ancients had nothing to learn here ; the beautiful and good were expressed by the Greeks conjointly in one term. Socrates says of bodies, arts, and domestic economy that, "in all these things there is a just order and a deformity, and that deformity and discord are sisters of evil speech and evil manners, in like manner as the contrary are of the contrary, being sisters and imitations of temperance and virtuous manners ‡." In fact, a life at enmity with God, seems of necessity to produce in the human countenance an expression of deformity, which is

\* Le sacré Mont d'Olivet, 279.

† Epist. xxxv.

‡ De Repub. lib. III.



not found in any of his innocent creatures. The eye naturally turns aside in disgust from the face of the heartless libertine, the avaricious slave of wealth, the epicure, the unfeeling minister of law, the haughty proud man, or the energumen of any of those political theories connected with impiety. The countenance of the moderns is characteristic of their philosophy and of their manners,—cold, stiff, affected; it wears a tone of cunning and malice, of duplicity, curiosity, and disdain. There is nothing in it playful, natural, or benign: it is subject, like that of Julian, to immoderate changes of gloom and laughter; and betrays the inward and almost ceaseless storm of passion: not like that of the king Don Alonzo IX., who, in the bloody battle of Las Navas del Toloso, evinced throughout an equable serenity of countenance. Savedra mentions that no accident was ever known to develop the least symptom of passion in the person of the king Don Fernando the Catholic\*. The countenance of the middle ages is now chiefly to be found among the peasantry in Catholic countries,—the look of manly dignity, with innocent abandonment—the joyous and yet modest expression—the free and benign look which is never disconcerted by the presence of grandeur, and never clouded by the artifice of pride. All travellers remark the graceful dignity of the Tuscan peasant, and the respectful sweetness of expression which belongs to the youth of Ireland. It was, no doubt, these considerations, which made the holy men of ages of faith so indulgent and favourable to beauty. They would have reproached no one for being beautiful, but would have repeated the Homeric lines against those who should do so.

*οὗτοι ἀπόβλητ' ἐστὶ θεῶν ἐρικυδέα δῶρα,  
ὅσσα κεν αὐτοὶ δῶσιν, ἐκὼν δ' οὐκ ἂν τις ἔλοιτο †.*

\* Christian Prince, I. 351.

† Il. III. 65.

In proof of which assertion, it might be sufficient to appeal to that passage, where St. Ambrose evinces such a delicate sense of beauty and grace, in describing the human body \*; a subject which always draws from holy writers remarks of a similar kind. The ancient fathers had predicted evil of Julian, from observing the deformity of his countenance.

It is impossible to pass from this view of the meekness of men, during ages of faith, without delaying to cast a glance at the spirit and manners of that renowned chivalry which appeared in them, and which was the result of religion acting upon heroic minds, under circumstances which drew forth all the energies of human nature. So great was the meekness of noble manners, that spiritual writers used even to propose it as a model to those who wished to embrace a religious life. Thus brother John, a Carmelite, says, in his Instruction to Novices: "There are as many degrees of patience as of gentleness, and noble manners rest on patience. How common is it in the banquet-halls of the world, where the sense of honour is so delicate, that there should arise many provocations to anger, by looks, words, and actions, *et tamen quo quis nobilior est et honoris expectatio major, eò patientius adversa ferre discit.* Therefore the servants of God, who aspire to eternal honours, may well repress their anger, and shew a pacific heart to the contradictions of men †." The knightly portrait is never without this feature, whether we look for it in history or in romance. From the former we are presented with an early instance in Boëmond the Franc, as described by Anne Commeneus, who observes, that he united in his person all the perfections of the human form; adding, that "he stooped a little, not from any defect of the spine, but from a

\* Hexæmeron, lib. VI. cap. ix.

† Instructio Novitiorum, 209.

custom of youth, which was a mark of modesty\*.” This is curious, as the portrait of a youthful barbarian by a Greek; but even the heathens knew, that, as Plautus says, “modesty became the young.” An example more to our immediate purpose, is that of John duc de Berry, brother of Charles V. given by Christine de Pisan: “Il est prince de douce et humaine conversacion, sans haulteineté d’orgueil, benigne en parolle et response, joyeus en conversacion, et en toutes choses très traictable †.” Again, of Louis duc d’Orleans, son of king Charles V. she says “Douce response et amiable rent à toute personne qui à luy a à besoingnier ‡.” And respecting prince Charles, afterwards Charles VI., she dwells at greater length. “In his great benignity, sweetness, and clemency, he is past compare; humane to all kinds of people, without the least pride; and, to speak briefly, so full is he of great benignity, sweetness, and love, that God demonstrates it even on his countenance to such a degree, that he has so singular a grace of Divine Providence, that all people who see him, whether stranger, prince, or others, become in love with him, and are rejoiced in his presence; so that, oftentimes, I have been seized with admiration to see how the people, of all sorts, women and children, have flown through the streets, to see him pass §.” Don Diego Savedra Faxardo says, that in Spain, the royal young princes were always to be visited familiarly by every one, until Philip II. abolished the ancient custom, on occasion of his anger against Don Carlos ||. The writers of the old romantic histories love to paint the gracious meekness of their heroes in its

\* Liv. XIII. cap. 6.

† Livre des faits et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V. chap. xii.

‡ Liv. II. chap. xvi.

§ Chap. xv.

|| Christian Prince, Tom. I. 78.

most engaging colours, though it often presents a singular contrast with the scene which their imagination created for the development of their energies. Here we are only concerned with what is amiable in these extravagant portraits, and with what was most assuredly drawn from living manners. Of these books one of the most celebrated was the History of Gyron le Courtois, which seemed compiled for the express purpose of exhibiting the grace of courtesy, under every variety of circumstance, and of shewing what a revolution had been effected in the manners of those same Gauls, with whom the *væ victis!* had once been the style of conquerors. Here both knight and varlet are equally meek, resembling Spenser's gentle squire,

Of myld demeanure, and rare courtesee.

Their respectful manner of address is always described in this style: "*Il le salua moult doucement et humblement.*" Gyron's favourite expression is, "*Je ne vaulx ung garçon au regard de vous.*" On one occasion such honour is shewn to an old worthy, that the narrator is obliged to borrow a similitude from devotion: "*Tous luy faisoient si grant honneur comme se il feust ung corps saint\*.*" The scenes which follow are not without beauty and instruction for those who regard gestures as proof of noble spirit. Brehus being interrogated respecting a strange knight, who accompanied him, replied, "Sire, I do not know his name; for he so carefully conceals it wherever he goes, that to no man of the world will he ever say any thing respecting himself. So he travels about, concealing himself. And if he is among knights he is so humble, and so coy, and so silent, that he never says a word, and never holds any parlement respecting any deed that he has per-

formed. If you were to see him, then you would certainly think that he was not and could never be worth more than a poor boy. And when he is armed, and comes to perform any great feat, then you would behold wonders openly. We do not know whether he be of a king's lineage, or that of a count, or of low people; but he is the best knight that I know of at present among errant knights. And, in addition, he is so handsome a knight, that I do not believe there is another equal to him in all the world. Sire, I tell you of this man, that in my judgment, he is a perfect knight, and he has borne arms for xv. years." This was Gyron himself\*. Dante evinces the same humility, when, on being questioned by Guido del Duca, he modestly declines giving his name:

To tell ye who I am were words mis-spent,  
For yet my name scarce sounds on rumour's lips †.

To the manners of Dante, in this respect, Philip Villani bears a beautiful testimony, where he says, that "if it had not been for the courtesy which he always evinced, his countenance would have worn a melancholy tone." How admirable is that trait of a delicate and courteous heart, when he beholds in purgatory the wretched souls of the envious, and, being himself invisible, scruples to advance.

It were a wrong, methought, to pass and look  
On others, yet myself the while unseen.  
To my sage counsel, therefore, did I turn.  
He knew the meaning of the mute appeal,  
Nor waited for my questioning, but said,  
Speak, and be brief, be subtile in thy words ‡.

But let us return to Gyron, the pattern of cour-

\* F. CCXXXVIII.

† Purg. XIV.

‡ Purg. XIII.

tesy. When a contrary spirit was evinced, there is an amusing passage related, to shew that it ought to be ascribed to some deformity of constitution, and only pitied as incurable. Messire du Lac knocks at the gate of a tower in the forest, and begs to enter: a voice from the top of the battlement begins to insult him: the knight replies that this person is not too courteous whoever he may be: the voice from over the gate answers, “Je suis tant courtoys en toutes guyses que je nay mye de longueur cinq pieds non mye quatre se comme je croy. Je ressemble a vous trop malement qui estes grant et long comme ung dyable et cuyde certainement que tout ainsi comme vous estes plus grant que ung autre, aussi estes vous plus maulvais du tout. Tous ces grans vilains toute suoyes et tous ces grans chevaliers veons nous maulvais, pour quoy je croy que vous soyez du tout maulvais. Et pour ceste raison vueil je que vous aillez vostre chemin et delivrez la nostre porte qui nest gueres plus grant de vous. Autant estes vous grant comme elle est. Cest ung grant ennuy de vous veoir tant estes grant.” The knight sees it is but a dwarf who thus speaks, a little old man, not four feet high, with a head as large as a horse. “Sire, chevalier,” cries the dwarf, “ne vous est il mye avis que je soyes beau bachelier et bien fait de tous membres? Vrai est que vous avez en vous de vostre part la grandesse du monde et je ay de ma part toute la petitesse du siecle. Mais je ay tant de reconfort que je pourroye encores croistre, si Diëu vouloit pource que je suis encores trop petit, mais vous ne pourriez croistre, car vous estes plus grant que ung geant.” Du Lac cannot help smiling; but the dwarf continues to revile him, and to imprecate evil on him: “et messire Lac ne respond a ceste chose ne a ses parolles car il congnoist bien tout clerement que en celsuy ne pourroit il trouver nul bien ne nulle courtoysie en nulle maniere du



monde\*.” The hero of chivalrous fable was, in this instance, more true to meekness than don Alonzo III. in real history, who so resented the trifling incivility of Sancho of Navarre, in withdrawing after the battle of Arc without taking leave of him, that he had never rest afterwards till he deprived him of his state.

When Gyron le Courtois and the king Melyadus are engaged in battle, and some one leads a horse, and offers it to Gyron, that knight immediately presents it to his adversary, and says, “Sire, take that horse and mount upon it, and I will take another for myself and mount. You are so good a knight, that were I to mount, and leave you here on foot, it would be too great villany.” When the king heard this word, he was abashed, and replied, “Sir knight, do you really offer me this courtesy?”—“Sir knight,” answered Gyron, “certes I say truly, for I ought not to leave such a preudhomme as you are on foot.”—“But, sir knight,” continues the king, “I think that you ought not to offer it to me here, since I am in this place your mortal enemy: and if I were mounted, and found you on foot, do you not suppose that I would seek to revenge the shame to which you put me at the tournament?”—“Certes,” said Gyron, “I believe verily that you are my mortal enemy, as I have lately seen quite clearly; but for all that you mortally hate me as I see, I do not believe that so good a knight as you are would do villany to me or to any one else, car bon chevalier ne doit faire autre chose que bonte et courtoisie pour nulle aventure du monde†.”

All this representation of meekness and courtesy might be drawn from real history. At the magnificent tournament which took place at Florence in the square of the holy cross, Lorenzo de Medicis was

\* Fol. LXX.

† Fol. XXX,

declared conqueror. He speaks of himself on this occasion, with the modesty of a knight of romance: "I jousted upon the square of Santa Croce, and although I was not strong in arms or in blows, the first honour was still adjudged to me; that is an helmet all furnished with silver." Du Guesclin on his death-bed, after he had devoutly received the last sacraments, called the Mareschal de Sancerre and Messire Olivier de Mauny, and other knights, and said to them, "Seigneurs, par vos vaillance et non par moy m'a tenu fortune en grant honneur en toute France, en mon vivant, et a vous en est deu l'honneur, qui mon ame a vous recommande\*." The same style, so gracious from its humility, was employed in speaking also of friends, as in the Homeric instance, where the son of Nestor says weeping, "My brother perished," and only adding of him, οὔτι κάκιστος Ἀργείων†. And Homer, in allusion to Patroclus, even furnishes language which might convey an idea of that mildness of manner, which belonged to men in Christian ages:

—— παῖσιν γὰρ ἐπίστατο μείλιχος εἶναι,  
ζῶδς ἑὼν †.

To all equally mild, not like those who have ever a smile for the great and a frown and denial for the poor, but one of those souls which Montaigne calls souls of different stories or floors, which can be shewn freely to all men; which can converse with a neighbour about his building, with a carpenter about his work, with a gardener about his plants, which can make itself one among the least of the persons that are present. John the Deacon relates a saying of St. Simeon a short time before his death. "Mi optime Joannes, neminem mortalium unquam sperne:

\* Chronique de Du Gues. c. 442.

† Od. IV. 200.

‡ Il. XVIII. 671.

sunt etiam inter rusticos et mendicos qui Deo sint charissimi." A French nobleman, who lately died, used to salute every poor person that he met on the way, and was the first to evince respect. Spenser describes a scene, drawn from the ancient manners of the Christian society, which might be studied with advantage by the moderns, who shew so little regard to strangers when they do not find themselves in the vein to meet them in exchange of gracious conversation; and who seem to think with the old pagan:

Lupus est homo homini, non homo  
Quum qualis sit, non novit.

Spenser says,

He comming neare gan gently her salute  
With curteous words, in the most comely wise;  
Who, though desirous rather to rest mute,  
Then termes to entertaine of common guize.  
Yet rather then she kindnesse would despize,  
She would herself displease, so him requite\*.

In the middle ages, the respect shewn to strangers was perfectly Homeric. It was not then in the higher classes studied as a noble art to render to all persons unknown such aspect as cloudy men use to their adversaries. All were similarly disposed in this point: the poor man, or the domestic, said, "gaber chevalier estrange est trop grant villennie†." The nobleman said, with the Roman poet,

Cum te non nossem, Dominum regemque vocabam,  
Cum benè te novi, jam mihi Priscus eris ‡.

St. Pacomius was a young Roman soldier, whose

\* Faery Queen, V. 6.

† Gyron le Courtoys, LXVIII.

‡ Martial, lib. I. epig. 113.

conversion originated in his observing the extraordinary kindness with which he was treated by some Christians, who received him to hospitality. At the same time the ancient manners possessed a civility which was not forgotten or unimproved by the Christians. Father Bouhours remarks in his dialogues, that the graces were represented always of little stature, in order to shew that this virtue consisted in little things, in a gesture, a smile, or a respectful air. The traveller, indeed, might have learned humility and meekness of demeanour, from the verses of that Roman poet, who, exiled amidst the desolate wilds of Thrace, had yet the sense and candour to admit, that it was he who was the barbarian, since he was not understood by the natives :

*Barbarus hic ego sum quia non intelligor illis.*

It belongs rather to a particular review of chivalry, than to the general glance which we are now throwing upon ancient manners, to dwell upon the courteous interchange of words, which strangers used to practise to each other; but in a history relating to the middle ages, there is one instance associated with a name of such poetic interest, that I cannot forbear adducing it. When Petrarch was on his road from Vaucluse to Montrieux, between Aix and St. Maximin, he met with a company of Roman ladies, who were going on a pilgrimage. By their air and gait he distinguished, at a distance, their country and their birth. Drawing near, he stopped and politely asked them from whence they came and whither they were going. The sound of an Italian voice spread joy through this little company. The oldest of them answered, "Rome is our country; we are going on a pilgrimage to St. James. And you Sir, are you a Roman? are you going to Rome?" "I am not going there immediately," replied Petrarch, "but

my heart is always there." This answer inspired the pilgrims with confidence; they surrounded Petrarch, and replied to a thousand questions which he asked them concerning the state of the republic: Petrarch then asked these ladies if he could be so happy as to serve them in any respect. "Every thing," says he, in a letter to Lelius, "urged me to make them this offer, God, their virtue, their country, and their love of you. I wished to divide with them the sum I had brought with me for my journey: their answer was, 'pray to God that our journey may be successful: we ask only this of you.' This reply delighted, but did not surprise me: I perceived in it the dignity and disinterestedness of Roman ladies." Petrarch, charmed with their discourse, would have passed the day with them; but they were bent on hastening towards their pious design: and he was also eager to behold his brother, the monk at Montrieux. "While our discourse lasted," adds he, "I thought I saw those holy virgins who made so distinguished a figure in our Christian annals: Prisca, Praxedes, Prudentia, and Agnez."

Shakspeare ascribes to Theseus a most delicate regard for humble persons offering their honest but unskilled civility, where he says,

Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake :  
 And what poor duty cannot do,  
 Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.  
 Where I have come, great clerks have purposed  
 To greet me with premeditated welcomes ;  
 Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,  
 Make periods in the midst of sentences,  
 And in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,  
 Not paying me a welcome: trust me, sweet,  
 Out of this silence, yet, I pick'd a welcome :  
 And in the modesty of fearful duty  
 I read as much, as from the rattling tongue  
 Of saucy and audacious eloquence \*.

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\* *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V. 1.

It must be admitted, however, for such courtesy there is less occasion in countries under the influence of the modern spirit, for there the poor are themselves sufficiently disdainful; reminding one almost of that portrait in the *Odyssey*, though, indeed, wanting all its dignity, where Ulysses, though in the dress of a beggar, is ready every moment to assume a countenance that strikes the beholder with terror, *ἑπύδρα ἰδών*. But this subject of the gracious courtesy of manners in past ages, must not detain our steps. It has been, in fact, exhausted in other works, and after all, respecting the form of manners in which the principle of meekness developed itself, there can be no enquiry of any great importance instituted; for this is subject to the changes to which every thing that relates to the conventions of men is exposed. The Christian society has survived many revolutions in the form of manners, as well as of languages, philosophy and empire. It beheld the hollow professions of flatterers and sensualists, under the Roman Cæsars; the savage roughness of the barbarians of the North; the courtesy of the chivalrous middle ages; the politeness and refinement of the court of France, in later times; and, finally, since the revolution in that country, and wherever the new philosophy has spread, it has marked a strong tendency to affect a certain tone of proud isolation and personal insensibility to the ancient harmonies of a social state. Undeserved importance should not be attached to these things, which have no relation whatever with beatitude, beyond what they may derive from that one living source of meekness and benignity, which will never be sought for in vain among those who have raised their eyes to the mountain, whose conclusion will always be that of the wise king, saying, "it is better to be humbled with the meek, than to divide the spoils with the proud \*."

\* Prov. xvi.



That spirit may, indeed, yield to the impression of different external forms; for the fancies of men, which give birth to the language of signs, are capable of being as various as their wants and miseries; but no change in this respect, that the caprice or circumstances of mankind may hereafter demand, will ever be able to efface the traces of its constant operation in the manners of our ancestors, or render doubtful the fact which is so beautifully attested by all kinds of concurrent evidence, that under the simple and manly discipline of ages of faith, modesty and gentleness were virtues belonging to all classes of society, admired in a Bayard or a Chandos, as constituting the courtesy of the accomplished gentleman, revered in an Ambrose or an Anselm, as being the result of saintly meditation, and of holy prayers; as proving the sincerity of a faith which has no lovelier fruits than those which are offered to the Creator in ministering to the necessities of men, to diminish the multiplied wants and to form even some sweet harmonious tones out of the very discords of our common nature.

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## CHAPTER II.

THE history of the middle ages, for reasons which we cannot now stand to discuss, may be considered as a continuation of that of primitive Christianity. We must be prepared, therefore, to meet with the same contrast to the whole spirit and manners of heathen times, and of all nations who subsequently have cast off the authority, and the traditions of the Christian Church. The development of the principle of religious obedience, as belonging to the character and to

the blessedness of the meek, is the subject to which our attention must now be directed. History bears testimony to the wide extension and efficacious operation of this principle, during the ages of faith: it was the key-stone of the whole fabric of the spiritual society, and the test by which all efforts to advance were estimated. Disciples of him who was obedient unto death, who came from heaven not to do his own will, but that of him who sent him; in whose heart was written the desire of doing the will of God, men in these ages believed with St. Gregory the Great, that, "it is obedience which produces in the soul all other virtues, and which after producing, preserves them." Accordingly, those who entered the orders of the Carthusians, and the Benedictines, that is to say, those who aspired to Christian perfection, made no other vow but this, on their profession, "*Promitto obedientiam secundum regulam*;" for that they conceived was to vow every perfection. "Be subject one to another in the fear of Christ," said the apostle of the nations\*. Implicit obedience, where neither religion nor common sense can discern a sin, was prescribed by St. Basil†, by St. Fulgentius‡, by St. Bonaventura, St. Jerome, St. John Climachus, Cassien, the Abbot Sylvain, St. Bernard, and St. Francis de Sales. It is prescribed, not alone to the Jesuits, but to all the religious orders, not merely as a distinction, but as being one of the primitive and fundamental characteristics of all who embrace Christianity. Let us hear their sentiments: "What perished and is dead in Adam, hath risen and lives again in Christ. Whatever rose again and lived in Adam, hath perished and is dead in Christ. But what is that?—true obedience and disobedience§."

\* Ad Ephes. v.

† See Reg. xxviii.

‡ In Vita, c. xxvii.

§ Theologia Germanica, cap. xiii.

Disobedience and sin, are one and the same. There is no sin but disobedience; and what springs from disobedience\*. What is sin, unless the creature wishing contrary to the will of God †? “Consider this, when we speak of obedience, of the new man, of true light, of true love, and of the life of Christ; all these things are one and the same. Where one of these is present, all are present; and where one is wanting, all are wanting; for all these things are truly and in fact one‡.” Let us now hear Lewis of Blois; “No action, however pious or laudable, pleases God, if it be contaminated with the sin of disobedience§.” “In all our works, words, and thoughts, we must sincerely seek God, and refer all things to his honour, and have a heart pure and free. It cannot be said, how grateful to God and fruitful to ourselves will be this holy intention; if a man were only to move his foot, or his hand, or his tongue, purely on account of God, or to incline his head, or to have the least thought, or the least desire according to charity, there would be a great reward for him ||.”

Original justice is only obedience: for it consists in these three things, in perfect subjection of the will to God by sanctifying grace, in entire subordination of the inferior powers to reason, and in obedience of the body to the soul. This was the philosophy which presided over education. “What, then, will the youth know on leaving the college?” asks Bonald, “Nothing; for what can one know at eighteen? But if nature has seconded education, and education nature, he will have the mind opened and the body disposed; he will have the knowledge of order, sentiments of affection for others, the habit of obedience ¶.”

\* Id. xiv.

† Id. c. xxxiv.

‡ Id. cap. xliii.

§ Enchirid. Parvulorum, lib. I. Doc. v. append.

|| Id. lib I. 1.

¶ Législation primitive, III. 100.

As the test of piety, and the rule of genius, obedience may be seen in continued operation. St. Gregory, of Tours, relates his conversation with the monk Wulfilaich, who had lived the life of a Stylite in the diocese of Trèves, till he descended for the purpose of destroying a Pagan idol, a statue of Diana, whom he had persuaded the people to forsake. "I was then preparing to resume my former mode of life," says the humble monk; "but the bishops came, and said to me—the way that you have chosen is not the right way, and it is not for you to imitate Simeon of Antioch. The climate does not permit you to endure a similar suffering: descend, then, and dwell with the brethren whom you have collected. At these words, that I might not be accused of the crime of disobedience towards the bishops, I descended, and went with them, and took a repast with them. One day, the bishop having drawn me far from the village, sent some workmen, with hatchets, to destroy the pillar on which I used to hold myself. When I came back the next day, I found it destroyed. I wept; but I would not rebuild it, lest I might be accused of disobeying the bishops. Since that time I dwell here with my brethren\*." Behold, now, obedience as the rule of genius. St. Theresa speaks as follows, in the Prologue to the Castle of the Soul. "Of all the things which obedience obliges me to perform, there is not one which appeared to me so difficult as to write upon prayer; both, because our Lord has not given me sufficient genius to do it well, and that I had no intention to undertake it; and, also, that for the last three months I have suffered such weakness of health and disorder, that I can hardly write upon the most urgent affairs; but, as I know that obedience can render possible what appears impossible, I engage in it with joy, in spite of the re-

\* Greg. Tour. I. 440.

sistance of nature. So it is only from the goodness of God that I expect assistance."

Ælred, of Rievaulx's cloister that Bernard of England, concludes his *Speculum Charitatis* with the same testimony. Addressing the person for whom it was written, he says, "I beseech you do not introduce this mirror before the public, lest, perchance, charity should not shine in it, but only the image of the author be found there. If, however, as I fear, you should involve me in that confusion, I beseech the reader, by the sweet name of Jesus, not to suppose that I undertook this work from presumption, since I was compelled to do it by paternal authority, fraternal charity, and my own necessity to obey my superior, to converse with my absent brother, and preserve my own mind from idleness\*."

That I have not overstated the importance which was ascribed to the spirit of obedience, will be clear to every one who is conversant with the moral history of the middle ages. Guizot, speaking of the chapters of St. Benedict's rule *De Obedientia* and *De Humilitate*, takes occasion to remark, what a part this monastic rule of obedience, as he terms it, has played in the history of European civilization. "It is," he says, "in the monastic institute, that it has been truly developed. It is from thence that it has spread itself through modern civilization. This," he adds, "is the fatal present which the monks have given to Europe†." This opinion of a writer, who, on several occasions, has spoken with more respect of the middle ages than many Catholics, should not be passed by in silence. Let us consider briefly the two questions which it involves. What was the origin of this principle. Did the monks invent it? And can we justly regard its effects as injurious? Is

\* *Speculum Charitatis* in fin.

† *Cour. d'Hist. Mod.* II. 75.

it fatal? Words may, indeed, not tell of that blissful certainty, respecting all such questions, which belongs to the initiated in the heavenly courts, yet these will not disdain the use of human evidence.

And, therefore, let our reasoning serve, though weak,  
For those whom grace hath better proof in store\*.

The virtue of obedience, as far as relates to mortal agency, commenced with the creation of the race of men. In paradise it had its action, and it revived immediately after the fall. "The tree of knowledge was good in itself," says St. Theophilus, "so was its fruit. It is an error to suppose that it had a property of causing death. This fatal effect was not attached to the tree, but to the disobedience of man. There was nothing in the tree but knowledge, which is good, provided it be well employed †." In paradise was heard that eloquence which now sounds forth on all sides, recommending the contempt of authority in the pursuit of knowledge, artfully or ignorantly passing over the danger of disobedience, which alone rendered it injurious.

———— Knowledge forbidden?

Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord  
Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?  
Can it be death? And do they only stand  
By ignorance? Is that their happy state,  
The proof of their obedience and their faith?  
Envious commands, invented with design  
To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt.

———— Is knowledge so despised?

Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold  
Longer thy offered good ——— ‡.

So reasoned Satan with those primal creatures whose life was in obedience, and from their fall dates the inclination of the human will to resist that of

\* Dante. † Ad Antolyc. lib. II. 25.

‡ Par. Lost, V.



God, which all other creatures obey; for “nothing resists God,” says St. Augustin, “but the will of sinners.”—“I speak of that worship of obedience,” says St. Eucher, “which even creatures, wholly material, render to their Creator. Behold the stars, how equable and constant their course; the flowers and fruits, which succeed, without interruption, to serve for our pleasures and our necessities. Behold, in a word, the whole creation constantly subject, in the interest of men, to the will of God; and, in the midst of this creation, man alone dares to emancipate himself from this universal subjection, and alone revolts, while all obeys around him!” Father Diego di Stella says, that “the beginning of all our misery was Eve’s curious disputing about the commandment of God. If she had been obedient she would have replied to Satan, when he asked her why did God forbid her to eat, that the authority of God was sufficient for her, but because she went about to dispute the matter at large, and to exercise her private judgment, she utterly undid herself\*.” On the other hand, a converse offering of obedience was known to be the principle of man’s recovery. Thus, in apostolic times, St. Irenæus pursues the argument of the apostle, and says, “As the human race was involved in death by a virgin, so is it delivered by a virgin. Virginal obedience is weighed against Virginal disobedience†.” Here, then, were sublime, mysterious examples, ever present to the minds of the faithful, when they were tempted by heretics, and called upon to examine, with the serpent, with Eve and Adam, and not obey authority, with all the saints who ever passed to life from the beginning of the world. “From the school of the demon,” says Drexelius, “cometh this, Why, quare

\* On the Contempt of the World. III. 480.

† Lib. adversus hæreses.

aut cur hoc?" So also the guide of Dante,

Seek not the wherefore, race of human kind.

Short is the next step of the fatal way, when Eve's conclusion is approved.

In plain, then, what forbids he but to know ?

Forbids us good ? forbids us to be wise ?

Such prohibitions bind not.

For these ambitious hopes of false freedom religious obedience presented a secure preventative, and the instructions of faithful ages can only be understood, by a reference to this knowledge, and profound consideration of the original malady of the human race. "Believe," says Taulerus, "every day lost in which you have not resisted your own will for the love of God\*."—"Self-will not consenting to the Divine will is the chief evil of man," says Drexelius." Remark, here, how well they distinguished between our own will, and a will contrary to God. "We ought not," says St. Anselm, "always to wish what God wishes ; but we ought to wish that which God wishes us to wish. For God wished that the blessed Martin should be taken from this life ; but if his disciples had wished this they would have been cruel. They knew what God wished ; but they wished what God wished them to wish†." The master of the Sentences shews how two wills may exist in man, that of man, and that of the Christian. As Bede says of Christ—"As man he prayed that the cup might pass from him ; yet again," he added, "Sed non quod ego volo, sed quod tu vis‡"

"Some one may ask," says the author of *Theologia Germanica*, "since this tree, that is self-will, is so contrary to God, and to the eternal will, why did God create it, and place it in paradise ? To this it may

\* Epist. viii.

† De Similitudinibus, cap. clix.

‡ Sentent. lib. III. distinct. 17.

be sufficient to answer, that a man, truly humble and illuminated, does not wish that the secrets of God should be revealed to him, to know why God does or defers this or that; on the contrary, he wishes rather that he himself should be reduced to nothing, and should be void of will, that the eternal will might live in him, and be opposed by no other will\*." God created the will, not that it should be self-will, but that it should be conformable to his own, yet with such freedom as was necessary to constitute a distinct agent. Then came the Devil and Adam, that is false nature, and arrogated this will to themselves, and rendered it self-will; and this is the fatal eating which brought death and all our woe—"for as long as there is this self-will, there can be no rest †." "God alone," says St. Anselm, "ought to wish any thing of his own will. When man wishes any thing of his own will, he takes away from God, as it were, his crown; and as the proper will of God is the source and origin of all good, so the proper will of man is the beginning of all evil ‡." That there is no exaggeration in this statement of the evil of self-will, would appear equally certain, both from posterior and prior reasoning; whether we argued philosophically or theologically. What, in fact, can be a greater proof of its involving some great moral disarrangement, than the very circumstance of that disposition which we can always discover in it, to resist and disobey merely for the sake of disobeying? "Made, as we are, by false nature," says one who deeply studied the human heart, "it is almost always sufficient, that a thing be ordered or forbidden, to make us feel tempted to resist. Nothing can be more strange or unreasonable, but nothing is more true §." Experience, moreover proves that his own

\* Cap. xlviii.

† Id. lv.

‡ S. Anselmi simil. c. viii.

§ P. Judde œuvres spirit. tom. IV.

will is a source of misery to the mind of man. "Voluisti, domine," cries St. Augustin, "et ita est, ut omnis inordinatus animus sibi ipsi sit poena." "O, how great a punishment is a man's own will unto himself! If that would cease, hell would soon cease also. Whereupon doth the fire of hell work, but upon the will of man? And if any trouble afflict thee, what is the cause of thine affliction, but thine own will?" These are the words of Father Diego de Stella. "This will of our own," says St. Bernard, "is a great evil whence it comes to pass that your good is no good to you; for of this blood-thirsty parent, there are two insatiable daughters ever crying bring, bring; for the mind is never satiated with vanity, nor the body with lust: self-will, subverting the hearts of men, and blinding the eyes of reason, is a restless evil, which always pressing upon the spirit, meditates things that are beyond thought and unattainable\*."

On the other hand, what peace and joy belonged to the ancient fathers, amidst all their tribulations, because they were meek and full of obedience. There were not wanting to them tribulations, "nam quo quis sanctior, hoc plerumque afflictior:" but that equable serenity of mind proceeded from the conformity of their will, with that of Jesus Christ †. Dear to them were

Soft silence, and submissee obedience,  
Both linckt together never to depart,  
Both gifts of God not gotten but from thence,  
Both girlands of his saints against their foes offence ‡.

Christ apprises men that his yoke is a light and easy burden, although he had warned them before,

\* Serm. LXXI. in cant. et serm. in verba, Ecce nos reliquimus omnia.

† Drexelius de Confor. human. Vol. cum divina, III. 6.

‡ Spenser, iv. 10.

that the way which led to him was narrow and strewn with pains. A moment's reflection to an instructed mind, will be sufficient to shew the advantage of religious obedience, and the folly of that sentence of condemnation, which the modern philosophers have passed upon it. In the first place, these men can claim no exemption for themselves from the general law of nature, which condemns all men to serve: we are servants by nature and by purchase. The world is full of obedience; but it is the "obedience of cupidity or of necessity, whereas the obedience of Christians, is that of charity." "Behold," says St. Bonaventura, "the obedience of those who serve worldly masters: what promptitude, what zeal, what prevention! No regard to danger, or suffering, or difficulty; no view even to personal advantage. They obey, and do not even wait for orders; but watch the countenance of their master: and the least sign, or even a look, is sufficient for them\*." "Every man," says St. Anselm "is born to labour as the bird to flying. Does not almost every man serve either under the name of commanding or of serving? Quid refert, exceptâ superbiâ, quantum vel ad mundum, vel ad Deum, quis vocetur servus†?" Ah! when will human weakness serve God as well as it serves the world; serve heaven as well as it serves the earth; serve virtue with as much zeal as it serves vice! This is the exclamation of St. Peter Chrysologus. And what an unjust, ungrateful master is the world! It hateth and despiseth those who love it: it abandoneth its friends. "Peccavi, tradens sanguinem justum," cried Judas to those for whom he had sacrificed friendship, honour, and all that is dear to the heart of man; for whom he had betrayed the innocent, betrayed his

\* De sept. grad. vit. spiritual. cap. xliii. xliv.

† Epist. lib. I. 15.

God, and condemned himself to everlasting infamy. But they replied, "quid ad nos? tu videris." How exactly the language of the world, in all times, to its deluded slaves! "Quid ad nos? tu videris." But then it is too late, wretched mortal, to enter upon another service.

That golden sceptre which thou didst reject  
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break  
Thy disobedience.

Better that thou hadst never been born. On the other hand, observe that the obedience of Christians is not that of necessity. "The will is every thing," says St. Bernard." Therefore our Saviour spoke those words: 'Take my yoke upon you'—as if he had said to them,—I do not impose it upon you against your inclination, but take it yourself if you will; otherwise I say unto you, you will never find peace unto your souls, but trouble and vexation\*." "Beatific love is free," says the meek Hildegard. "Free-will is preserved in faith," as St. Irenæus says. St. Augustin shews, that man can only believe by willing: and speaking of the Jews, where it is said in Scripture, that they could not believe, he adds, "Quare non poterant? Si à me quærat, cito respondeo: quia nolebant†." A holy man was accustomed to say, "Whatever you wish, that you are. Quicquid vis, hoc es: for such is the force of our will, joined to the Divine, that whatever we wish to be, seriously, and with a true intention, that we become. No one ardently wishes to be submissive, patient, modest, or liberal, who does not become what he wishes." This is what that holy man used to say. Faith, according to the doctrine of the Church, is a virtue, and therefore it must depend upon the will: thus St. Thomas says, "Credere est

\* De amore Dei.

† Tract. in Joan. 53.



actus intellectus assentientis veritati divinæ ex imperio voluntatis\*:" and St. Bernard says, "Take away free-will, and there will be nothing to save;" adding, "take away grace, and there will be no means of saving †." As is read in the schools, "This is the true essence of all religion, that it should be the voluntary and free-tribute of the whole man, that he may be capable of merit or of demerit. And therefore the evidence of this truth is such, that they who wish to see, can see; and they who wish obstinately not to see, do not see ‡." "The Christian religion," says Melchior Canus, "is not like the Pythagorean, which obliged its followers to follow blindly the words of a master, without rendering a reason for them. This is the custom of ignorant persons, Saracens, Pagans, and hereticks, who embrace the rash dogmas of their sect, without exercising their judgment, and receive them without any reason. These are not instructed, but confined; not taught by reason, but acted upon as if by charms and incantations; but God does not will that his disciples should be thus constrained. Eusebius relates, that Lucian of Antioch, being asked by the judge why, being a rational and prudent man, he followed a sect for which he could render no reason, replied; 'We Christians are not, as you suppose, constrained by the error of any human persuasion; nor are we, like others, deceived by the tradition of parents, received without enquiry,' and then went on to make an eloquent apology for the faith §." "We say there are three kinds of liberty," says St. Anselm. "There is the liberty of action, which all wish; that is, that they may do what they like: there is the liberty of the understanding, which all do not wish: there is also the liberty of

\* S. S. quæst. II. art. 9.

† De Grat. et Liv. arbit.

‡ La Hogue Tractat. de Religione, cap. ii. prep. 3.

§ Melch. Can. de Locis Theologicis, lib. XII. cap. iv.

right-will, which is always good, and which very few wish; that is, that they may wish those things which they ought to wish. It is to be noted, that the liberty of action, without the liberty of good-will, is always evil. *Libertas actionis sine libertate bonæ voluntatis semper est mala*: the liberty of the understanding is mediate, being good when joined to liberty of right-will, and evil when without it †.

If now, from the abstract doctrine of obedience, we pass to the institutions and rules of life which proceeded from it, we find the same contrast to the ignoble servitude of the world. True, every one, however low in authority, was to be obeyed in the fear of God; but in this system, no one was tyrannically required to bow down to the superior talents or strength of a fellow creature, according to the principles of those gross politicians and preachers of false religion, who are continually ascribing to visible men the grandeur of the invisible God. Man never felt himself the slave of his equal, nor was he subject to an arbitrary law. Besides this perfection in principle, the positive exercise of obedience was the highest freedom. Guizot says, that the code of St. Benedict offers a singular mixture of despotism and liberty. Implicit obedience is the principle, and yet the government is elective—the monks are to obey, but the abbot is to consult them. Thus in the third chapter we read, “Whenever any thing of importance is to be transacted, let the abbot convoke the whole congregation, and let him explain the matter, and hear the opinions of his brethren, and then let him judge. Let him call all the brethren to the council, because God often reveals the best advice to the youngest:” and in conclusion, he admits, that within the cloister, that is, where the principle of obedience was in full operation, men were governed

\* *De Similitudinibus*, cap. clxxxii.

by a more reasonable authority, and in a milder manner, than they would have been in civil society \*. There was nothing tyrannical in the ecclesiastical theory of rule. Witness what said the Irish synod in the VIIIth century. “Non debet facere quicquam sine consilio subjectorum, nisi pauca in liberationem vincitorum, et in consolationem pauperum et viduarum †.” What mildness and benignity is here ! The sovereign authority of monastic superiors was totally removed from any thing arbitrary, for all was regulated beforehand : traditions and customs directed the least actions of the monks ; they prescribed to them how they were to proceed to the chapter-house, or to the refectory ; how to return from it ; how they were to assist at the nocturnal office. There were laws for speaking and for silence. The monastic code had regulated every thing down to the mortifications of penance and the innocent enjoyments of the cloister. History records at what epoch of the year, in the monastery of Cluny, beans and herbs were to be seasoned with oil or butter, on what occasions the monks were to have fruits, eggs, spices, and fish. The greatest punishment which a superior could inflict upon a disobedient monastery was to abandon it, for his absence was regarded as the being abandoned by heaven. This is what Michaud says †, All this may be seen at any time in a Catholic college, where the greatest discipline and order are united with real freedom and Christian love : for the Catholic religion teaches men to bear rule in God’s name, so that their superiors need not keep up their authority by an affectation of superiority and mysterious reserve. All assumption of authority in the Christian state was the work of mutual love. This is indicated in many parts of the ritual and order of

\* Cours d’Hist. II.

† Dacher. Spicileg. tom. IX.

‡ Des Monastères au Moyen Âge.

the Church, which was in ages of faith the model or basis of the ceremonial of civil society, so that a study of it will throw the greatest light upon the whole theory of the ancient civil government. Thus in every parish church when a new curate was installed, the ecclesiastic who conducted him to the seat of authority, and he who was to take possession gave each other mutually the embrace and kiss of charity. In short, veneration, consisting of love, fear, and shame, was shewn by sons to their parents, by subjects to their rulers, and by all men to priests and to God, whose greater glory was known to be always furthered by obedience to superiors. And we may observe by the way, that generally men were left in no doubt to know what was the will of God. “*Quicquid abducit à Deo contra Dei voluntatem est: quicquid ad Deum invitat, ad divinam voluntatem est,*” said Drexelius \*. The will of God which Christ taught was thus expressed in the tract, ascribed to St. Cyprian, on the Pater. “Humility in conversation, stability in faith, modesty in words, justice in deeds, mercy in works, discipline in manners; to do no injury, to keep peace, to love God, to prefer nothing to Christ, to adhere faithfully to his cross.” The source of slavery and of disorder lies deep in the heart of man, where it must be sought, and not in the defect of civil institutions. The general and outward anarchy in a state, says Plato, “Proceeds originally from an internal democracy in the mind of each man who belongs to it: when the sentiments of pleasure and pain which constitute that power in the soul answering to the populace in a state are suffered to prevail, there ensues in that mind an intellectual democracy or anarchy, which is the last and most dreadful evil in a state, and in the soul of man †.”

\* De Confor. Voluntat. Hom. lib. I. c. iv.

† De Legibus, lib. III.

Against this the principle of religious obedience was directed, and thus anarchy and servitude were attacked in the sphere of intelligence; and hence the world was not become as in later days,

A stage to feed contention in a lingering act.

The spirit of religion was essentially the spirit of order, as the spirit of the religion of later times is that of disorder and confusion, according to which every man rejects the guidance of a common legislator, and lives as he likes best, *κυκλωπικῶς θεμιστεύων παίδων ἢ δ' ἀλόχου*. The ecclesiastical discipline was received as an universal law; the desire of the ancient sage thus became the mark at which principles were aimed, and anarchy was taken away from the whole course of human life\*, so that the visible results could justify the rapture of the ascetic, when he cried, "O sweet and grateful service of God, by means of which man is rendered truly sanctified and free†." "When man arrogates to himself a liberty for the sake of sin, or what is contrary to God, he can endure no disappointment or misery. Then rise up to heaven the interminable murmurs of his bitter discontent. This is not a true divine liberty from a true divine light, but it is a natural, unjust, false, erring, and diabolic liberty from a natural, false, and erring light‡." It is not strange that men under the influence of this liberty should regard the obedience of faithful ages with aversion and disdain. They are strangers to obedience unless in case of a command, like that of Ulysses telling them to remember eating and drinking, and then they obey as readily as the companions of that hero.

*οἱ δ' ὥκα ἑμοῖς ἐπέεσσιν πίθοντο §.*

\* Plato De Legibus, XII.

† Theolog. Germanic, cap. xli.

‡ De Imitat. III. 10.

§ Od. X. 178.

Dante describes them in these terms :

———— Nor curb

Avails you, nor reclaiming call, heav'n calls,  
And, round about you wheeling, courts your gaze  
With everlasting beauties. Yet your eye  
Turns with fond doting still upon the earth,  
Therefore He smites you who discerneth all \*.

The effects of religious obedience in these ages may be considered in relation to the temporal and spiritual authority, in both of which respects they appear equally admirable. With regard to the first. "See what a dignity it is, men said, to acknowledge none over thee but God, and what is greater than to be under him †?" By obeying God in man, I never obey my inferior or my equal; but only him whose service is a kind of empire and royalty. Nothing can be more flattering to all the noble sentiments of nature than to be called upon to exercise holy obedience. In such a service no one is found to pray to heaven like the watchman of Æschylus, for a remission of his nightly and servile labour ‡." I am created for God. All below God is unworthy of me. The ascetical writers observe, "that here we cannot be too proud, since such pride is but justice, and that the natural sense of dignity may be at the bottom only a motion of this true greatness misdirected §." This is the spirit which entitles a man to the praise bestowed on Job, when it is said "*fuit vir unus*," always consistent with himself because united to the divine will. Satan and his accomplices having rebelled, God created man, and subjected to his service angel wings, and established him as his repre-

\* Purg. xiv.

† Meditat. for the use of the English Coll. at Lisbo, IV. 3.

‡ Agamemnon, i.

§ P. Judde Retraite Spirit. 68.



sentative, and as his knight against the devil. The moral dignity of persons who act from religious obedience, seems something above humanity; they move then like blessed spirits, conformable in all things to the eternal order, and one beholds in them, as it were embodied and shadowed forth, the majesty of him whom they serve. In relation to the spiritual authority, the religious obedience of these ages might suggest innumerable reflections; the first and most obvious is that of Louis de Blois, where he says, "Heresy has no other source but pride and disobedience; for heretics obstinately follow their own sense, and are unwilling to submit their own judgment to the decrees and judgment of the Catholic Church \*."

Such were the men described by Dante :

Who journey'd on, and knew not whither : fools  
 Who, like to scymitars, reflected back  
 The Scripture-image by distortion marr'd †.

To their reproaches, the Catholic might have replied in the words of Milton :

———— Still thou err'st, nor end wilt find  
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote :  
 Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name  
 Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains.  
 ———— This is servitude.  
 To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd  
 Against his worthier.

Omitting all higher considerations than those of the present life, what a loss of wisdom and of peace was theirs ! They had no moral dignity arising from a sense of their own position with regard to the universal order. In society they were seen ever hanging upon the tongue of strangers, in hopes of some novelty,

\* Enchirid. Parvulorum, lib. I. doc. v. append.

† Parad. XIII.

ever anxious, and curious, and unsettled, loving debate and discussion μήστωρας αὐτῆς: prying into the opinions of others, and ready to acknowledge that they were themselves without conviction; as attentive to a libertine or an apostate, as our ancestors would have been to a man of the interior life. The Holy Ghost thus describes them: "Arundinem vento agitatam, folium quod vento rapitur\*."—Having abandoned the rule of truth, they found themselves on a moving soil on which their reason could not find rest. The last extravagance of human error is to make a religion of independence. The sentiments of eternity which the Christian revelation has imparted to men, left without authority in faith, expose the human mind to speedy destruction. Physicians themselves have remarked the fact, that the spirit of sect favours the development of mental alienation, while catholicism imposing obedience, that burden of Christ which has wings not weight, presents to it the greatest obstacle. The extravagance of a religious zeal without discipline and order, to which every ardent mind without the Church is subject, is one of the primal sources of insanity; and this is for ever excluded from the meek communion of Catholics: for

In its devotion, nought irregular  
This mount can witness, or by punctual rule  
Unsanction'd; here from every change exempt,  
No influence can reach us †.

But independent of all temporal considerations, their error was most manifest: and here I must anticipate a theological argument, and give it in the words of Fenelon. Jesus Christ speaks thus: "If any one hear not the Church, let him be unto you as a heathen and as a publican." "Remark here,"

\* Matt. xii. Job xiii.

† Dante, Purg. XXI.

says Fenelon, "that he saith not, if any one hear not the Church of his country, or that to which among different churches he is attached by his birth or by his inclination; he does not suppose many churches between which each one might choose according to his liking; he supposes but one, which was to be his spouse for ever. Schism, which establishes many churches in spite of Jesus Christ, who desires that there should be but one, is therefore the greatest of all crimes. In vain do our separated brethren maintain that the ancient Church was fallen to ruin, and into the desolation of idolatry. If the visible Church was for a single day to have become idolatrous, Jesus Christ would not have said, absolutely and without restriction of times and nation, 'If any one does not hear the Church.' On the contrary, he would have said, 'If any one hear the Church during ages of error and idolatry, let him be unto you as a heathen and a publican \*.'" In fact, the moderns have transferred their obedience to a human society upon the principle of the ancient world, "*Deos patrio more et ex instituto civitatum colendos*:" though according to their own system, obedience to any authority ought to be equally condemned: to recommend it is raising a Doric pæon in the Athenian camp, adding only distrust and confusion to their own allies †. A purely domestic state of religious society is what is called natural religion, and the public state of this society is revealed religion. "One may remark," says Bonald, "a great parade of domestic affections in all sects who wish to bring back domestic religion into public society, and at the same time a great indifference for public duties ‡." In the patriarchal times, when the rule of faith was by domestic tradition, to refrain from following the religion

\* Lettres sur l'Eglise.

† Thucyd. VII. 47.

‡ Législation Primitive, Tom. I. 421

of one's parents would have been a fatal apostasy; but under the Christian dispensation, this authority was transferred to the public society of the Church, which all the nations of the earth were to obey. "O my daughter, hear and behold; lend an ear to my lessons, forget the house of thy father, and then the King of heaven will have pleasure in thy beauty." It is thus that God speaks to the soul of man in the 40th Psalm. Thus does he wish that after the example of Abraham, this soul should quit its country, its parents, should abandon the regions of the Chaldæans, that is to say, the places which are subject to the empire of the demons, to fix its abode in the land of the living, which is the Church, that cherished land, the object of the ardent sighs of the prophet, when he said, "I hope, yes I hope to behold one day the riches and the perfections of my God in the land of the living\*." To resist this authority and yet retain the title of those who would defend the faith, must render men the very objects of that angelic reproof.

——— And could'st thou faithful add? O name,  
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!  
Faithful to whom?

Indeed, in the commencement of the deplorable separation, no such inconsistency could be charged upon the innovators. As they are described by the contemporaries, the son was armed against his father, the brother against the brother, the servant against his master.

Les enfans sans raison disputent de la foy,  
Et tout à l'abandon va sans ordre et sans loy;  
Morte est l'autorité: chacun vit en sa guise;  
Au vice desreglé la licence est permise:

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\* St. Hieron. Epist. ad Eustoch. Virg.

Thus writes Pierre de Ronsard, in his Discourse on the Miseries of his time. "Alas! how sad is the present condition of Christians," said Fuller, "who have a communion disuniting!" The reply of these men whom no yoke could bow, and no bridle hold, to the invitations so affectingly addressed to them by Catholic pastors, reminds one of that answer given to the Prince of Angels in Milton.

——— Err not, that so shall end  
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style  
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win,  
 Or turn this heav'n itself into the hell  
 Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,  
 If not to reign \* :

But it is not strange that disobedience should produce such fruit on earth, when it was able to change into demons, those who, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, were once in the delights of the paradise of God †. Let us return to those that were faithful, found among the faithless, to that one fold of which all the sheep hear the voice of the shepherd, follow him and fly from the alien ‡, to those who had no idea of a perfection that did not consist in obedience, and who were content with the knowledge that the meek are blessed.

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## CHAPTER III.

I approach a subject of the highest importance, which demands all our attention: of infinite extent and requiring the tongue of an angel, I can but pre-

\* Book IV. 288.

† Ezech. xxviii.

‡ Joan X.

sent a few detached fragments to employ the reflections of the reader, and summon to my aid the sentences of angelic men, who have treated upon it in their writings. As in some vast metropolis, when a civil rage has burst through all restraints, and pushed to open war, a thunder of artillery has shaken its most solid towers, and each man who loved order, has been exposed to death; if at the drawing on of evening shade, some pious recluse is heard to sound the angelus bell, which recalls the days of meek obedience; then tears burst from the eyes of many, who before seemed unmoved by all the desolation: so does joy well from the heart of those, long conversant with heretic debate, when their thoughts return to the Church of Christ, to that house of sweet untroubled order, of gentleness and peace.

Religion is the reason of all society, since, without it, man cannot find the reason of any power or of any duty. Religion, then, is the fundamental constitution of every state of society. Civil society is composed of religion and state, as the reasonable man is composed of intelligence and organs. Man is an intelligence which ought to make its organs serve to the end of its happiness and perfection. Civilized society is nothing but religion which makes political society serve to the perfection and happiness of the human race. These are the observations of the illustrious Bonald \*, whose theory of government might be taken for a history of what existed among men during the ages of faith.

The Church is defined by theologians, to be "the society of wayfaring men, who profess the true doctrine of Christ." When our eyes are once opened upon the wisdom and providence of God in the establishment and government of his Church, we are filled with astonishment at the new points of view

\* *Législation Primit. II. 132.*



which are unfolded in history ; and, as Bonald says, “ we feel confounded at the thought of the number of books which require to be re-written.” From whatever side one regards the spirit and the institutions of the Catholic Church, one is ravished with admiration ; as in every thing that relates to it, one perceives the assistance and the action of the Divinity. The more one fathoms the secrets of this mysterious spouse of the Divine Word, the greater are the torrents which seem to burst forth, of a light as dazzling as it is unexpected. There is nothing, even in the smallest detail of its belief and practice, which does not offer more truths, and more real wisdom, than can ever be discovered by the investigations of science or genius. Well may she address her children, in the beautiful words of Dante,

To rear me was the task of power divine,  
Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.

The sentiment of their own dignity, as being members of the holy Catholic Church, made the meek men of faithful ages feel their hearts beat within them. In their faith they possessed all things ; they could find all things ; while without it, there was only nothingness, fatigue, and affliction of spirit \*. But observe well with St. Cyril of Jerusalem, that it is of the Catholic Church we speak, that which possesses throughout the universe an unlimited power. Therefore adds this holy bishop, if you should ever arrive as a stranger in any city, do not ask merely where is the Church ? the heretics dare to give themselves this name : but ask where is the Catholic Church ; for that is its particular name—that is the special title of this holy mother of all the faithful, of this glorious spouse of our Lord Jesus Christ, only Son

\* *Revue Catholique*, tom. I.

of God \*. Soon after the ages of faith there arose churches, established by human law, systems raised up like the walls of Athens, bearing marks of having been constructed in haste, and to meet the peculiar circumstances of the moment; for it is the property of all sects to pander to the temporary passions of men; and it is their end to be despised and forsaken by the unstable troop that followed them, as soon as that passion subsides: hence it was easy to detect them. The parts were not jointed into each other; but laid on just as each person, man or woman could throw them; and among them one might have discovered many pillars from tombs, *στῆλαι ἀπὸ σημάτων*, and carved stones which had been brought to the work from a distance †. But as for the Church of the ages of faith, the Christian, the Catholic, or if men will, the Roman or papal, for all these mean the same thing, any one could, in an instant, point it out, for there was no other like it. As Nausicaa says to Ulysses, speaking of the house of her royal father, in the city of the Phœcians:

*ῥεῖα δ' ἀρίγνωτ' ἐστὶ καὶ ἂν παῖς ἡγήσαιτο  
νήπιος ‡.*

This was Catholic: not merely, as we shall see hereafter, from catholicity of doctrine and of time, but also of necessity from catholicity of places. There could be no region where its name had not reached §. This was visible, and men were not then infected with the hatred of all visible authority; but they knew that man, body as well as mind, cannot be governed by pure abstractions without reality. Even its adversaries admitted generally, with Melanchthon, that a Church must be visible, of which

\* S. Cyril. Catechesis, XVIII.

† Thucyd. lib. I. 93.

‡ Od. VI. 300.

§ La Hogue tractat. de Eccles. LXI.

the Son of God said, "tell it to the Church;" and of which the apostle said that it was made a spectacle to the world and to men. They admitted with him, that "the portentous discourses which denied the visibility of the Church, destroyed all the testimonies of antiquity, abolished judgments, and introduced an endless anarchy\*." This Church, in its threefold state of being militant, patient, and triumphant, comprised the three divisions of all that belongs to men, with respect to the earth, purgatory, and heaven. This was commemorated as not having spot or wrinkle; but yet, as St. Augustin says, "such words were not to be understood in reference to its present, but to its future state, when it is to appear glorious: for now," he adds, "on account of some ignorance, and the infirmities of its members, it has daily reason to say, *Dimitte nobis debita nostra* †." But as a remedy for the woes of man, and a source of needful truth, it was universal and infallible: it was a light to guide his feet into the paths of peace. If it did not remove every shade which rests upon the ways of the mortal life, it furnished a steady lustre, which not only sufficed to guide him safely, but which made him discover even charms in the darkness at his side, so that he might exclaim, in the words of Dante:

O sun! who healest all imperfect sight,  
Thou so content'st me, when thou solv'st my doubt,  
That ignorance not less than knowledge charms ‡.

As St. Hilary said in his book on the Trinity, "The Church offered a remedy against all diseases of the mind and heart, it comprised so great a number of

\* Opera, Præfat.

† S. August. Retract. Lib. II. cap. xviii.

‡ Hell, XI.

truths, that it could pursue error under all its forms, and in all directions. Its truth was ever manifested by what its adversaries held. It was unchangeable in its essence, but it was known and appreciated better in proportion as the attacks against it were multiplied. It was the sublime prerogative of the Church that it should triumph when attacked: that its truths should most shine forth when men wished to accuse it of error; and that it should repair its losses by new conquests. After separating from it, the adversaries separated from one another; and in attacking each other and gaining victories over each other, they, in fact, conquered for the interest of the Church, whose factors they were; for thus the errors of one sect were overthrown by another; her foes slew themselves, and their controversies ended in confirmation of the Catholic doctrine."

The moderns practically divide the human race into two classes. It is either, their country, their political party, their school of philosophy, their domestic circle, their immediate family, and the whole rest of mankind, whom they are willing to dismiss from their thoughts, or to speak of them with contempt or anger, as the impulse of the moment may direct them. In the ages of faith also, men divided the human race into two classes, but only one of them had a real, visible, and present existence, and this was the Church of Jesus Christ; that immense society, embracing men of all ages and all nations, and all schools of philosophy, and descending by a series of saints and great men, from Jesus Christ and thence from the patriarchs and the cradle of the universe. The other, the world condemned by Jesus Christ, was known only in theory as an abstraction, and referred to the Omniscient Judge who was to make the final separation. With respect to the institution of the Church, what we are chiefly

called upon to consider in this place is the measure employed by the providence of God to preserve it in unity ; and here is a theme that demands everlasting admiration, to be described only in the celestial language of the saints. St. Peter and St. Paul are martyred at Rome, " which obtains," says St. Ambrose, " the principality and the headship of nations, that where had been the head of superstition, there might rest the head of sanctity ; that where the princes of the Gentiles dwelled, there might inhabit the princes of the Churches \*." Celebrated is the passage of St. Leo, where he speaks of St. Peter coming to Rome. " What were the nations of which there were not natives there ? Here were to be overthrown the opinions of philosophy ; here were to be dissolved the vanities of earthly wisdom ; here was to be abolished the worship of demons ; here was to be destroyed the impiety of all kinds of sacrilege ; for here was collected with the most diligent superstition, all that was ever instituted by vain error. To this city then, O blessed apostle Peter, didst thou fearlessly come ; and into this wood of roaring monsters didst thou enter with that companion of thy glory, Paul : trusting thyself upon this ocean of most turbulent depth, with more constancy than when thou didst walk upon the sea †." St. Peter concludes his first epistle, speaking of the Church of Rome, as that which is collected in Babylon ; for by Babylon he meant Rome, according to the interpretation of Tertullian, Eusebius, St. Jerome, St. Augustin, Orosius, and others ; and it was so designated on account of the influx of all kinds of error and superstition. And now behold, through the amazing grace of highest God, what a change is here. Tacitus said of Rome, " that to that city from all sides, every thing atrocious and shameful flowed

\* Serm. LXVI. De Natali S. Apost. Pet. et Paul.

† S. Leonis Papæ Serm. I. de S.S. Apost.

in ;” and we may say of Christian Rome, that thither flowed in from all parts of the world, whatever was illustrious and holy. Do we seek the testimony of genius? Petrarch having to choose between being crowned by the university of Paris, or by the senate of Rome, prefers the city where dwells the pontiff, who holds in his hand the whole race of men that worship Christ with knowledge. *V' siede il successor del maggior Piero.* Even Dante forgets his prejudices, as a Ghibelin, when he beholds the gracious vision of Matilda. Is it the opinion of the learned that we demand? “Of all the places of the earth that I have visited,” says the author of the martyrs, “Rome is the only one to which I should wish to return, and where I should be happy to pass my life.” Is it the opinion of those who study heavenly wisdom that we require? “If you approach Italy,” says Tertullian, “you have there the Church of Rome, whose decisions and doctrines give to ours all their authority\*.” Do we desire to learn what were the sentiments of saints? St. Vincent de Paul wrote from Rome, to say that “he was so consoled to find himself in that city, the metropolis of the Church militant, containing the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul, and of so many other saints and martyrs who have shed their blood for Jesus Christ, that he counted himself happy in walking upon ground which had been trodden by so many holy personages, and that this consolation had moved him to tears.” Is it the judgment of the intelligent and deeply reflecting writers of the middle age that we desire to know? Suger’s early acquaintance with the court of Rome, is assigned as one source of his subsequent wisdom of administration, when, as regent of France, he merited the title of the father of his country. Even John of Salisbury, when relating his first conversation with

\* *De Præscript.* xxxvi.



Pope Adrian IV. at Beneventum, respecting the scandalous reports that prevailed against the administration, founded upon the riches which were drawn to Rome, has the candour to say "unum tamen audacter conscientia teste profiteor, quia nusquam honestiores clericos vidi quam in ecclesia Romana, aut qui magis avaritiam detestentur." The pope reminded him of the fable of the belly and the members, and concluded by saying, "Such, my brother, is the case in the republic of the Church. Be slow, therefore, to condemn, but attend to the general utility\*."

May a rude and recent pilgrim be allowed to add his humble testimony? Of all the cities in the world which his eyes have looked upon, there appears most faith, most piety in Rome. In no other place, does human nature as exalted by the religion of Jesus Christ, appear so innocent and so worthy of the grandeur of its Maker. All is spiritual within those holy gates. There one sees the saintly host of men separate to the Church, there walk innocent troops of holy students, angels of modesty; there are the lovers of wisdom, who exercise rule with meekness under the great pontiff who succeeds to Peter's chair; there kneels a multitude of poor continually in the churches, like those described in the mysterious vision of the blessed John, who had no rest day or night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come!" Rome, in her monuments, in her traditionary exercises, in her ceremonies, in her inscriptions, in her tone of manners, preserved by the fostering rule of Popes, speaks more forcibly to the reason and to the heart of man, than any book that ever was written to prove the truth of Christianity. While the civil power has imparted a certain

\* De Nugis Curialium, lib. VI. cap. xxiv.

tone of paganism to nearly all other states, there religion is made to the eye of all men, the one thing of paramount necessity. There only Christ seems to reign unopposed; from thence only seem to have fled the enemies of our Lord's cross; there only seems to have already conquered the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He who finds himself at Rome, wonders not that he should have past seas and lands from far to visit it, but rather why all men who worship Christ do not flock eagerly thither to supplicate and adore. Thence returning, he looks with careless indifference upon all other cities which now seem to him as only the fit residence for barbarous courts and unlettered merchants; from henceforth there remains only the care of cherishing precious, inestimable recollections; this earth can present no higher testimony; all is seen.

But it is necessary to speak more at large respecting the doctrine of the supremacy of Rome, which was universally acknowledged in ages of faith, and which was the foundation of all their spiritual greatness. The language of holy antiquity, adduced in evidence here, will render unnecessary any other explanation or any further comments. St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, the second from St. Peter, begins his Epistle to the Romans, "Ignatius to the Church that is sanctified, which presides in the region of the Romans." St. Irenæus says, "that all Churches of the world are to submit to the Roman Church\*." Tertullian again says, "could Peter be ignorant, who was called the foundation stone of the Church, to whom was given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the power of binding and loosing upon earth†." St. Cyril, of Alexandria, in his book against the Greeks, cited by St. Thomas, says, "All bow their head to Peter by divine right, whom the primates of the world obey as if the head Jesus.

\* Advers. Hæres.

† De Præscript. cap. xxii.

We, therefore, that are members ought to obey our head, the Roman Pontiff, and adhere to the Apostolic See." St. Chrysostom says, "that St. Peter deserved to become for ever the fixed and indestructible foundation of the Church\*." "Always remain united in heart and mind, in communion with the chief of the Roman Church," says St. Jerome, "and however prudent, however firm in good principle you may believe yourself to be, never lend an ear to any one who would speak to you of a faith which is not that of St. Peter, of whom the existing Pope is the true and only successor." This is what St. Jerome says†, and again, he asks Rufinus, "Is our faith that of the Roman Church, or is it that contained in the books of Origen?" If he answers it is Roman—then we are Catholics. "Si Romanam, ergo Catholici sumus‡." Again, "whoever you are that assert new doctrines, I beseech you to spare Roman ears: spare that faith which is praised by the voice of the Apostle§. "Be it known that the Roman faith cannot be changed." The fourteenth Epistle of St. Jerome to Pope Damasus, proves how universally and completely this doctrine was established at that time. The sermons which remain of St. Asterus, Archbishop of Amasia, who died at the beginning of the fifth century, form a precious evidence respecting the universal jurisdiction of the sovereign pontiff, as well as other parts of Catholic discipline. Even a heathen writer of the fourth age says, "In episcopo Romano positam esse præcipuam Christianorum auctoritatem||." Hence arose, in the distant provinces of the empire, a confusion of names, similar to what now exists among the populace of England; for the heathens of Gaul used to call the Catholics, Romans. Thus the pagan

\* Serm. on the 12 Apost.

† Epist. ad Demetriad.

‡ Advers. Ruf. Lib. I.

§ Epist. xli.

|| Ammian. Marcellin. lib. XV. cap. vii.

king, Theodegisilus, thought to account for a miracle by saying, “*Ingenium est Romanorum et non est Dei virtus.*” St. Gregory of Tours adds here in a parenthesis, “*Romanos enim vocitant homines nostræ religionis* \*.” The constant exercise of primal jurisdiction by the Roman Pontiffs is to be remarked. In the second century Pope Victor proposed to excommunicate those who did not celebrate the paschal festival on the same day as the Roman Church. In the third century, Pope Stephen acted similarly with respect to those who held the necessity of rebaptism, and neither the Asiatic nor African Churches ever objected to this as an invasion of their rights. “In the Apostolic See,” the fathers of the fourth council of Constantinople recognise “the whole and true solidity of the Christian religion.” Prayers were offered up for the Pope in the Eastern Churches until the fifth century, when Acacius, the Bishop of Constantinople, dared to erase his name from the sacred Dyptychs. “The Roman chair,” says St. Augustin, “is the rock which the proud gates of hell do not conquer †.” “Infidelity can have no access to the Roman and principal See,” says St. Cyprian ‡. “It is on St. Peter alone,” he says in another place, “that the Lord has founded his Church: it is to him that he confided the care of feeding his sheep, and although after his resurrection, he gave to all his apostles an equal power, saying, “As my Father hath sent me, so send I you,” nevertheless, in order to make all enter into unity, he established only one chair, and this chair is that of Peter. Doubtless the other apostles were all endowed with the honour of the same functions, but by this disposition of the Saviour, all is confined to unity, all flows from this

\* Greg. Turon. *Miracul.* lib. I. 25.

† In *PS. cont.* Part. Donat.

‡ *Epist.* lv.

unity. The supremacy is given to Peter, in order that there may be only one Church of Jesus Christ, and only one chair whence truth may be extended to all the world. And is he who will not preserve this unity to believe that he can preserve faith? Has he who resists the Church, who abandons the chair of Peter on which the Church is founded, has he the presumption to believe that he is within the Church? As for the Christians of all ranks, as for us above all who are bishops and guardians of the Church, it is our duty to preserve with care, to defend this precious unity, in order to prove by this that the episcopacy also is one and indivisible. Let no one seek by falsehood to deceive his brethren. The episcopacy, I repeat it is one. The Church is one as there is but one light, although the sun has an infinity of rays. And as the innumerable branches of a great oak united with the trunk and roots form but one tree, so the Church has but one chief and one principle. Woe then to those who separate themselves from this unity, without which there can be nothing solid and immutable in the Church. In separating themselves, they detach themselves from the principle of life, as the branches which have been cut off from the trunk whence they derive nutriment, fail not soon to languish, and to lose all the lustre of their freshness and verdure\*." Accordingly, he says of Novatian, that despising apostolical tradition, he rose from himself, and, therefore, he calls him, "*Episcopum adulterum et extraneum qui humanam conatur facere ecclesiam.*" Admitting that he might have had ordination, he had no mission†. In answer to Antonianus who had asked what was the heresy of Novatian, he replied, "Be it known to you that we have no curiosity to enquire what he teaches, since he teaches without. If he were to be slain for the

\* Lib. de Unitate Eccles.

† Epist. 55.

name of Christ, without the Church, he could not be crowned \*." According to the universal doctrine of antiquity, schism was a crime which not even martyrdom could expiate. It rendered useless even a right faith. "Why when they believe rightly," says St. Jerome, "do they make themselves Arians by their obstinacy, dividing the Church, though convinced of the truth?" St. Bernard, so deeply instructed in the faith of all preceding ages, speaks as follows to Pope Eugene. "Come let us examine who you are, and what person you bear for a time in the Church of God. Who are you? A great priest, a great pontiff. You are the prince of bishops; you are the heir of the apostles; in primacy you are Abel, in government Noah, in patriarchate Abraham, in order Melchisedech, in dignity Aaron, in authority Moses, in jurisdiction Samuel, in power Peter, in unction Christ †."

Such, then, is the universal sense of Christian antiquity upon this subject. It might seem superfluous to produce similar testimonies from the documents of the middle ages, whose sentiments on this point were so faithful and exact; but the attempt of some modern scholars to claim a sympathy where they might least expect to find it, (for there were more heresies in the primitive Church, than during the middle ages) will render it necessary to prevent their objections by evidence from the very quarter which they have deemed vulnerable. Neander, in eulogizing the character of St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany, has the courage to maintain that he was opposed to the claims of the Roman supremacy; and some English writers have attempted to defend a similar position, with respect to the early churches of Britain and Ireland. These, however, are the paradoxes of controversial writers, which no historian has been

\* Epist. 65.

† De Consideratione.



found to advocate. Truly, what that time was when England was Christian before being Catholic or Roman, if men would rather, I think scarcely sphynx can tell. Guizot quotes the saying of St. Boniface, that "Rome is the centre, and the Pope the chief of Christianity;" and he even says, that in converting Germany, St. Boniface "gave it as it were to the pope-dom." In an epistle to Pope Stephen, St. Boniface says, "If any thing should be found, said, or done, by me, less skilfully or unjustly, with a ready will and humility I declare myself desirous of being corrected by the judgment of Rome\*;" and again he says, "we have decreed and confessed that we will maintain the Catholic faith and unity, and subjection to the Roman Church, to the end of our lives. Moriamur, si Deus voluerit, pro sanctis legibus Patrum nostrorum, ut hæreditatem cum illis æternam consequi mereamur †" In another epistle he signs himself a bishop, *discipulus Romanæ ecclesiæ ‡*. Such were the sentiments of these Anglo-Saxon missionaries, whom some late writers have attempted to describe as founders of what they term their national liberties. Their maxim recorded, was that of all Christian antiquity, "quid enim prosunt bonorum operum emolumenta," said they, "si extra Catholicam gerantur ecclesiam §?" The constant intercourse between Britain and Rome may be well conceived from the sentence of the Saxon Chronicle, "This year there was no journey to Rome; except that King Alfred sent two messengers with letters ||." To the doctrine of the Irish Church, down to the eighth century, that is long before its reception of the Pallium ¶, express testimony is borne by the decree of the synod, published by Dacherius, in his Spici-

\* Epist. xci.

† Epist. xci.

|| P. cxii.

† Epist. cv.

§ Id. Epist. xliv.

¶ S. Bernard. vit. S. Malach. c. xv.

legium. "Patricius ait: si quæstiones in hac insula oriantur ad sedem Apostolicam referantur\*." Alas, reader! forgive me, and speak now as with a friend. Walks there a man this day upon the earth, so remorseless, as to turn away from these testimonies of ancient British faith, without some touch of pity, misgiving, or amaze, when he contrasts them with what now passes "through distortion of misguided wills?" Say, how comes it that gentle minds, so formed for truth and love, should still remain closed to such plain accumulated evidences, and that men who have ever stood beneath the mountain should give utterance to such fearful words as we hear:

——— Is there no place for union left?  
None left but by submission; and that word  
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame,  
After so long a course  
Of other promises and other vaunts,  
Than to submit——

If it had been possible to have followed some of the first seducers into the deep recesses of their hearts, and to have seen the doubt and desolation there, how surely would the strain have changed!

——— Ah me, they little know  
How deadly I abide that boast so vain,  
Under what torments inwardly I groan.  
Such joy ambition finds.——

This would be the place to speak of the meek reverence with which the sovereign pontiffs were treated in ages of faith: clearly it must have corresponded with their elevation, since it was generally the piety of the faithful which gave force to their dignity; yet the presence of Pope Leo I. clothed in his

\* Tom. IX. lib. XX. cap 5.

pontifical vestments, made even Attila tremble, and obliged him to retire and abandon his resolution of destroying Rome. When Pope Stephen V. came into France, the Emperor Lewis repaired to Rheims to meet him. On coming into his presence he prostrated himself three times, and then maintained with grandeur, during the interview, the majesty of the throne. "It is the interest of princes," says Don Savedra, "to have their eyes like the Heliotrope, always turned upon the sun of the pontifical tiara. Don Alonzo V. of Aragon, in the article of death, charged his son Don Fernando, king of Naples, to esteem nothing so much as the authority of the apostolic see; and to take care never to offend the sovereign pontiffs, whatever right might be on his side. Impiety or imprudence make it a point of honour to show fierceness towards the popes; but humility towards them is not a weakness; it is religion: it is no dishonour; it is a glory: the most submissive deference of the greatest princes, is only a pious magnanimity, which serves as an example to subjects, to shew respect to all that is sacred: no infamy results to those who render it, but rather an universal praise, as that which attended the Emperor Constantine, when he took the lowest seat in a council of bishops; and the King Egiquez, when he prostrated himself on the ground at another celebrated council in Toledo \*."

And here a reflection suggests itself forcibly to the reason of man; for that in every country of the world differing from each other so widely in manners, tastes, opinions, and supposed interests, there should be always in every age, such a number of persons profound in learning, ardent in enterprise, and full of patriotism, entertaining sentiments so perfectly opposed to all natural and human notions of society,

\* Christian Prince, II. 502.

all agreeing to maintain and willing to die like Sir Thomas More and Fisher, for the doctrine of the supremacy of the Roman pontiffs; a doctrine such as the heathen world could never have conceived, and which we may, at the same time remark is the object of detestation with all who systematically attack revelation, is a fact assuredly most striking and unparalleled, and enough to make all reasonable men pause before they acquiesce in the judgment of those who lament it as the result of error. The intervention of God in the establishment and preservation of his Church, is the miracle of history. Mabillon remarks as an instance, that at no time were the faithful of various countries more devoted and reverential in their professions to the Holy See, than in times when unworthy popes had succeeded to the apostolic chair. Thus Sergius, Archbishop of Cologne, and Rogerus Hammaturgensis modestly besought Sergius III. to bestow the pallium. How reasonable might it have seemed to condemn the person with the acts of Stephen VII. in his conduct to Formosus? And yet Auxilius, who wrote to Stephen in favour of Formosus, speaks thus to him: "*omni humanæ potestati subditi esse debemus, et quam maxime apostolicæ \**." With the same reverence did Fulco of Rheims apply to this unworthy pontiff; and the letters of Hatto of Mayence, and his suffragans, to John IX. contain these words: "*Noverit sublimitas sanctitatis vestræ quod nulla Fratrum unanimitas sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ potestati subjecta, fidelior atque devotior ac subjectior apparet, quam nos, qui vestræ dominationi et capiti omnium ecclesiarum omni mentis intentione subjicimur.*" Theolmar of Salzburg, and other bishops of Bavaria, wrote to the same John, declaring, that by no reports of perversity could they ever be re-

\*. In lib. II. cap. 17.

called from obedience to the Roman See. "We never believe, that from that holy and apostolic seat, which is to us the mother of sacerdotal dignity, and the origin of the Christian religion, any thing of perversity can flow, but only doctrine and the authority of ecclesiastical reason\*." Thus stood erect the pillar amidst the greatest wreck of high ordained spirits, as when the synagogue was most obscured, a more than ordinary sound from the voice of prophets announced that it had not fallen. We may add to the observation of Mabillon, that the veneration of men has also been always most strikingly exhibited towards that primal seat, at moments when, to the eye of the world, its glory seemed to have been nearest to the point of extinction. Cardinal Pacca has described scenes in confirmation of this truth, which in point of sublimity and pathos surpass perhaps all instances recorded in the past history of the Church: but the account given by a late illustrious philosopher of what he beheld on the return of Pius VII. will perhaps be most interesting, as the unsuspecting testimony of a stranger. "I went out," says Sir Humphrey Davy, "with almost the whole population of Rome, to receive and welcome the triumphal entry of Pius VII. that illustrious Father of the Church, into his capital; a man whose sanctity, firmness, meekness, and benevolence, are an honour to human nature. He was borne on the shoulders of the most distinguished artists, headed by Canova; and never shall I forget the enthusiasm with which he was received: it is impossible to describe the shouts of triumph and of rapture sent up to heaven by every voice. And when he gave his benediction to the people, there was an universal prostration, a sobbing, and marks of emotions of joy, almost like the bursting of the heart; I heard every where around me

\* Præfat. in V. Sæcul.

cries of ‘the holy father, the most holy father! his restoration is the work of God!’ I saw tears streaming from the eyes of almost all the women about me; many of them were sobbing hysterically, and old men were weeping as if they had been children\*.” Thus ended the persecution of the eighteenth century, to which one may apply the words of Nieremberg, “Such waves against the Roman Church have never been wanting in any age, which by battering her have broken themselves. Her enemies run to their ruin, swelling like waves against her rock, whose end, though they rage for a time, will prove foam and froth, into which others before them, no less proud and swelling, are vanished.”

It remains for us to consider the Church in its relation to the civil government of the state, and briefly to describe the controversies to which that relation has given rise.

“The tendency of the independence of the clergy over the body of the people (and by this Guizot means the civil power in general) is, in some manner, the history of the Church from its cradle †.” This admission will dispense us from replying to those reasoners who would date the ecclesiastical power from the age of Charlemagne. Constantine gave great power to the bishops in civil affairs, and wished them to wear crowns but they refused.

In the time of St. Athanasius and St. Cyril, the Bishops of Alexandria were invested with much temporal authority. The power of Pope Celestin was great; for he was able to deprive the Novatianists of their churches, and to prevent them from assembling openly ‡. But as Thomassinus observes, the Popes had a moral dominion in temporals before

\* The Last Days of a Philosopher, Dial. III.

† Cours d’ Hist. Mod. VI.

‡ Thomassinus, De Vet. et Nov. Discip. III. lib. I. cap. xxvi.



they possessed the judicial. Kings and people easily threw themselves upon the side to which they inclined. Hence the tears of Pope Gregory the Great, fearing lest so much secular business should separate him from the love of God. In Italy dominion came upon them, as it were, visibly by divine providence ; for there was no one to discharge its duties, and they were called upon to save the people by fulfilling them \*. John of Salisbury bears evidence to the sufferings consequent upon this pontifical power. " I call to witness," he says, " Lord Adrian, whose times God made happy, that no one is more miserable than the Roman Pontiff, for if nothing else should occur to injure him, the mere burden and labour must quickly overcome him ; he assured me that all former bitterness was pleasure to what he now experienced. He says the chair is thorny, and that the crown which seems so bright is of fire : had he consulted his pleasure, he said he would never have left his native soil of England, and his concealment within the cloister of the blessed Rufus, but he did not dare to resist the divine appointment ; he often used to tell me that ascending to the rank of sovereign Pontiff, step by step, from his cloistered obscurity, he never gained by ascending in tranquillity of life †." It was a common saying in the time of St. Ambrose, " that emperors rather desired priesthood, than priests empire ‡." " Cum infirmior tunc potens sum" was the rule to the new ambition of the Roman eminence, addressed to a successor of the fisherman, and to a disciple of the cross. His empire consisted in piety, virtue, tears, and prayer. Men rushed forward to give dominion to pontiffs, who like the kings of the golden world,

\* Id. III. lib. I. cap. xxvii.

† De Nugis Curialium, lib. VIII. cap. xxiii.

‡ St. Ambrose, epist. 35.

were pastors of the people. On beholding the solemn grandeur which surrounds the meek father of the Church, it is an emotion full of joy and gratitude, which comes upon the mind unprejudiced, for it immediately draws the inference, that the world has become Christian, and that the warlike youth of nations are deputed to pay their innocent honours to the vicar of Jesus Christ. Never did the world behold in so eminent a degree as in the grandeur of the papal power, the verification of the divine promise to exalt the humble. These Gregories and Hildebrands, when they did not go forth to meet the wolf, were as meek and humble as the lowliest of their flock. If we would desire an instance of humility in its utmost degree, we shall find it in the acts and language of the chief pontiffs of the Church. Witness that letter of Pius VII. to Napoleon, which I cite not as a more eminent but only as a more recent instance, in which he expressed his sorrow and penitence for having agreed through the weakness of his age and sufferings to the concordat which was injurious to the discipline of the Church, ending with these affecting words, “ Our conscience opposes insuperable obstacles to the execution of these articles which we acknowledge, to our confusion and grief, we incautiously subscribed, not from want of a right intention, as God himself is witness, but through human frailty, as dust and ashes.”

With respect to the opinion which prevailed of the origin of this temporal power, it may be well to pause an instant. In France many modern writers, not excepting even Bossuet, thought fit to found upon this supposed opinion, a charge of ignorance against the scholastic doctors of the middle age. With them St. Thomas, St. Bonaventura, St. Anselm, St. Antoninus, St. Raymond of Pennafort—are men who only groped their way in a dark age. Their grand offence consisted in supporting the false decretals. It may

be well then to state the simple fact to shew the extravagance of this declamation. The acts of councils and the papal decretals of the eight first centuries, formed the common law of France, as also of England, though Sir Matthew Hale, with singular boldness, appears to know of no obligation prior to the legislation of Henry VIII. and the authority of Parliament\*. In the ninth century, appeared a compilation of these decretals and acts, which are truly given as they really existed, excepting that certain dates and names are confounded; but these anachronisms were of no importance, for the substance being still the decretals and acts of the eight first centuries, really was the common law. The scholastic doctors, therefore, had only fallen into the error of a date or a name. This is shewn by Marchetti, the Archbishop of Ancyra, in his criticism of Fleury. Even the Protestant Blondel proves that these false decretals were composed nearly in the very words of the ancient canons. But, however defensible, they were always regarded as doubtful by the learned; and Dante might have known that they were publicly disowned in the tenth century. As for the scholastic doctors having believed in the donation of Constantine, it is to be remembered that this donation never passed for certain with them; that Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, treated it as supposititious, and that it was two scholastic divines, St. Antoninus, of Florence, and Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II. who first absolutely rejected it. Before them Adrian I., Nicholas I., and Gregory VII. omitted all mention of it in acts where they certainly would have alluded to it if it had passed for genuine. Burchard, Bishop of Worms, who lived at the end of the tenth century, excluded it from his collection, and the gloze upon Gratian's decretals adds, that it

\* Hist. of the Common Law of England, 24.

is never read in the schools. Dismissing then the question as to the origin of this power, let us briefly notice the attacks which have been directed against it from other sides. "Some men," says John von Müller, "speak against the Pope, as if it had been a great misfortune that there was an authority which had regard to the practice of Christian morals, which could say to ambition and despotism—thus far and no farther." "I know indeed," says Scotti, "that God who calleth the despised things of the world to confound the strong, in the first ages of Christianity, shewed innumerable wonders, and made all nations behold the omnipotence of his arm; but the need for prodigies ceasing, and wishing that the operations of grace should be hidden under the shade of nature to increase the merit of faith, he hath wished that his Church should follow a certain natural order for the maintenance of its own independence and influence\*." Vain attempts have been made to represent this power as inconsistent with the spirit of the Christian Church: and oft by men with minds at the moment so little open to the light of faith, that when they looked for succour, they spoke of

That high Providence which did defend,  
Through Scipio, the world's empery for Rome.

But in the first place, the passage which is quoted from St. John †, is read in the Greek text ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, which gives his kingdom is not from this world, but from his father. Besides, it is clear from the passage in the Gospel of St. Matthew ‡, where our Saviour adds, "quomodo ergo implebuntur Scripturæ quia sic oportet fieri?" that his words, as related by St. John "Regnum meum non est de hoc

\* Teoremi di Politica Cristiana, I. 298.

† xviii. 36.

‡ xxvi.

mun-  
do," must be understood as alluding to a temporal kingdom, which would have prevented him from being delivered to the Jews, and from being crucified to save the world. Such a kingdom would be utterly subversive of the Catholic Church, or rather there would in that event have been no Christian people to be governed. Nothing can be more extravagant than to make such a text an argument against the economy and government of the Catholic Church, which rest wholly upon the fact of that death and passion; so that the Church could not have existed if that kingdom had been established which the moderns now so vainly ascribe to the Church. This was a kingdom which ought never to have excited the fear of any other government that was founded on justice. The ecclesiastical and the civil power have been always recognised as essentially distinct, but directed by God to one end, which is, to the eternal and temporal happiness of the people\*. Walafreid Strabo, Abbot of Fulda, in the ninth century, shews that while they differ in offices, they have one and the same end in view, that "by means of the union and love of both orders, the one house of God may be constructed, the one body of Christ edified†." "Attentively reflect," says Pope St. Leo to an emperor, "that the royal power has been given to you by God, not only to govern the world, but principally to defend the Church‡." It may be observed that in a certain sense, the distinction of the two powers is founded in nature and discernible in every government of men. Œdipus arriving in a strange country, asks τίς λόγῳ τε καὶ σθένει κρατεῖ; who possesses the moral and physical force, or authority and strength§? Catching at certain expressions, and misinterpreting deeds of meekness,

\* Scotti, Teoremi, 248.

† De Rebus Ecclesiasticis, cap. xxxi.

‡ Epist. lxxiv.

§ Œdip. Col. 63.

you complain that the civil power was under the dominion of the clergy ! *σὺ δὲ ταῦτ' ἀνεμώλια βάζεις*. For have not other men a right to reply that you only want it to be under the dominion of your philosophy ? Since in one sense the civil power must, of necessity, be always under the dominion of the spiritual, so that the only question is, ought it to be for or against the Church of Christ, under the dominion of truth or of error ? The distinction of the two powers has been always invariably maintained by the tradition of the Church, although as Catholics in relation to Catholic states, it was impossible to believe them reciprocally independent, since the divine law was comprized in the spiritual order. In the middle ages there were no concordats to regulate the connection of the two powers, because God then reigned over man, and religion over law. Still less were there any constitutions like that proposed for Poland, by the Abbé de Mably, in which the authority of Rome was to be wholly rejected. The lessons given to princes were the necessary result of their professing the Christian religion. It will be well to take examples in proof of the sentiments of the age, though it must be understood that the occasions which gave rise to them, were, after all, remarkable as presenting exceptions to the general spirit of meek obedience which was evinced towards the pastors of the Church. The possibility of a collision between the two powers was apparent from the first ages. When the Emperor Constantius wished to ordain something connected with religion by his authority, the legate who presided at the Council of Nice, wrote to him as follows :—“ Do not meddle with ecclesiastical matters, lest you prescribe precepts to those from whom you should rather learn ; to you hath God given empire, to us he hath entrusted the things of the Church, and as he who should deprive you of empire would resist the ordi-



nance of God, so fear lest by arrogating ecclesiastical power, you should be guilty of a great crime. It is neither lawful for us to govern the earth, nor for you to touch the censer \*.” The laws of Justinian prescribed certain rules respecting ordination, but no attention was paid to them, and in some instances contemporary councils established a contrary usage †. Theodosius the younger, in his Epistle to the Synod of Ephesus, informed the fathers that he had sent to them Candidianus, but with express orders that he should take no part whatever in their controversies, “for it would be most atrocious,” he added, “if one who is not inscribed in the catalogue of most holy bishops should meddle with ecclesiastical consultations.” So that the princes who were present at councils attended only to protect the peace and freedom of the assembly. When the Emperor Maurice proposed a law forbidding soldiers to profess a monastic life, and wrote to Gregory the Great to publish it, the Pope replied, “I indeed, subject to the command, have caused the law to be transmitted to different parts of the earth, and because the law itself does not agree with what we owe to Almighty God, behold, in an Epistle I have declared so. ‘Utrouque ergo quod debui exsolvi, qui et imperatori obedientiam præbui, et pro Deo quod sensi minime tacui.’” Vincent, of Beauvais, says, “that they who make iniquitous laws, or statutes contrary to the law of God, and to ecclesiastical liberty, as many princes and counts are accustomed to do, ‘ipso jure,’ the laws are invalid, for no law can avail against God ‡.” When St. Hilary found that the Emperor Constance was resolved to attack even the faith of the Catholic Church, he wrote no more to him, but against him; “the time for speaking is arrived, the time of silence is passed. Let us raise our eyes

\* Apud S. Athanas. Epist. ad Solitar.

† Chardon, Hist. des Sacremens, Tom. V. c. 5.

‡ Speculum Doctrinale, lib. X. c. lxxxvii.

towards the Christ, for here the Anti-Christ reigns. The pastors ought to make their voice be heard for the mercenaries have taken flight. We contend against an enemy who seeks to deceive us, against a persecutor who caresses us: he does not deprive us of life, but he enriches us in order to drive us to eternal death: he does not grant us the liberty of a prison, but he honours us with the servitude of palaces: he does not kill with iron but with gold: he professes Christ to deny him; he desires union that there may be no peace; he honours priests that they may cease to be bishops; he builds churches and he destroys faith.” Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, who enjoyed such favour at the court of Charles-le-Chauve, shewed no less apostolic courage, in his treatise on the Divorce between Lothaire and Teutberge. “Some sages affirm, that this prince being king, is not subject to the laws or judgment of any one except God alone who has made him king, so that whatever he may do, he ought not to be excommunicated by bishops. Such language is not Christian and Catholic; it is full of blasphemy. The authority of the apostle says, that kings ought to be subject to those whom it institutes in the name of the Lord, who are to take care of their souls. When it is said that the king is not subject to the laws or judgment of any one but to God alone, this is true if he be king in deed as well as in name: he is called king because he governs. If then he govern himself according to the will of God, directing the good in the right way, and correcting the wicked to lead them back from the evil way to the good, then he is king, and subject to the judgment of no one but God—for laws are instituted not against the just, but against the unjust; but if he be an adulterer, a homicide, unjust, a plunderer, then he ought to be judged secretly or in public by the bishops\*.”

\* Hincmar, *Op. de Divort. Loth. tom. I. p. 693.*

When Louis III. in the year 881, interfered with a canonical election, Hincmar wrote to him as follows : “As for your reply, that you will do nothing but what you have done already, be assured that then God will perform what pleases him. The Emperor Louis le Debonnaire did not live as long as his father Charles\* ; King Charles the Bald your grandfather, did not live as long as his father ; your father Louis, did not live as long as his father ; and while you are living amidst all this pomp at Compeigne, cast your eyes on the spot where your father rests ; and if you do not know it, ask where did your grandfather die, and where lies he : and let not your heart be lifted up before the face of Him who died for you and for us all, and who afterwards rose again and who now dieth no more. Be assured that you will die, and you do not know what day or what hour ; you have need then like us all to be ever ready for the call of our Lord—you will soon pass ; but the holy Church with its chiefs under Christ, and according to his promise, will remain for ever †.” This solemn argument of Hincmar was repeated so late as in 1576, by the canons of the states of Blois when they demanded their ancient liberty of elections. They observed that the Carlovingian race had been of short duration, from having arrogated the right of disposing of ecclesiastical offices, while the Capetian, which from its origin, and after the example of its founder, had habitually respected their independence, had reigned for more than five centuries. In fact, Hugues Capet, on his coronation, abdicated the dignity of Abbot of St. Germain and of St. Denis, with which he had

\* The allusion, in this particular instance, was not just, for Louis the Pious renounced the right of interference with elections, and restored liberty to the Church, but his immediate successors deserved all the reproach of Hincmar. Chardon, *Hist. des Sacremens*, tom. V. c. vii.

† *Op.* tom. II. p. 199.

been invested, and restored in all the monasteries of his dominions the freedom of election, which had been denied them for a century before. "Without doubt," exclaims John of Salisbury, "whoever oppresses ecclesiastical liberty, is punished either in himself or in his offspring\*."

St. Cœlestin wrote to Theodosius the younger, saying, "the cause of the faith ought to be dearer to us than that of the kingdom, and prosperity attends him who has the greatest care of things most dear to God." And St. Bernard wrote as follows to king Conrad, "Whoever tries to make the cross subject to the throne, either does not love the king, or little understands what becomes the royal majesty, or seeks some interest of his own, or does not much care for the things of God and of the king†." In another place St. Bernard says, "May my soul never come into the counsel of those, who say either that the peace and liberty of the churches are injurious to the empire, or that the prosperity and exaltation of the empire are an injury to the churches‡." "The office of the emperor," says the Council of Mayence, "is only discharged when he lives in right faith, and true humility of heart, subjecting the height of royal dignity to holy religion, being more delighted to serve God in fear, than to rule over the people in fear, tempering anger with mercy, and power with benignity ; being more the object of love than of dread : and always remembering, that he is a son of our holy mother church, endeavouring to promote her peace and tranquillity throughout the world : for the empire is more maintained and propagated by consulting, in every part of the earth, the interest of the ecclesiastical state, than by combating

\* De Nugis Curialium, vii. 20.

† Epist. xxiv. 243.

‡ Epist. ccxliii.

in some one part for temporal security \*.” At the fourth council of Toledo, king Sisenand devoutly fell at the knees of the bishops and fathers, begging with tears, that they would pray to God for him, and that they would diligently attend to the interests of the ecclesiastical discipline †. It is examples of this kind which made Savedra say, that “it is an heroic obedience, which kings yield to the vicar of Him who gives and takes away sceptres: let kings glory as much as they please in not being subject to foreign laws, but never in being independent of apostolical decrees. It is their duty to give them vigour, and to make them be observed religiously in their states ‡.” In the sainted Isle of England during the ages of faith, we find the same meekness on the tongues of kings. In 694 Wihtred, king of Kent, spoke to the council at Bapchild, and said “I will that all the minsters and churches that were given and bequeathed to the worship of God, in the days of believing kings, my predecessors, and in the days of my relations, of king Ethelbert, and those who followed him, shall so remain to the worship of God, and stand fast for evermore. For I, Wihtred, earthly king, urged on by the Heavenly King, and with the spirit of righteousness annealed, have of our progenitors learned this, that no layman should have any right to possess himself of any church, or of any of the things that belong to the church. Kings shall appoint earls and aldermen, sheriffs and judges; but the archbishop shall consult and provide for God’s flock §.” We have also here the beloved authority of Alfred, for “he used to say, that the dignity of a king is real only in that case, where in the kingdom

\* Concil. Mogunt. sub Annulpho, c. II.

† Ribadeneira Princeps Christianus, I. 12.

‡ Christian Prince, Tom. I. 270.

§ The Saxon Chronicle, LIX.

of Christ, that is, the Church, he considers himself not as a king, but merely as a simple subject, where he does not rise up proudly above the laws of the bishops, but submits with humility and obedience, to the laws of Christ as proclaimed by them \*.” “Princes,” says the great Mabillon, “are but the first children of the Church, and should show an example of submission to her doctrines. Whenever they have attempted to usurp what belongs to her, they have only injured instead of benefiting the Church. All these conciliations, invented to calm rebellious spirits, and to lead them back to unity, have authorized them in their separation and revolt; their authority has perpetuated errors whenever it desired to assume the part of leading them back to truth †.” We have heard the sentiments of virtuous princes, in ages of faith, and beheld their meek obedience. Their merit will appear greater as we proceed to notice the examples which were before them, of the oppression of ecclesiastical liberties, and even of systematic resistance. The middle ages were spared the desolation of beholding a king who, like the caliph of England in the sixteenth century, constituted himself the head of both temporal and spiritual power; but yet there were found some few Cæsars, who affected a way to Olympus, by persecuting the Church. At one time, it was by interfering, like the present sophists of France, with the rights of the episcopacy, in order to avail themselves of its authority, and to counteract the influence of the Christian freedom. Thus by a law of Justinian, bishops were prohibited from ordaining any colonus or rustic, without the leave of the proprietor of the land to which he belonged ‡; and though the clergy soon succeeded in defeating this anti-christian ordinance, and

\* Harpesfield Hist. Angl.

† Petit carême.

‡ Cod. Just. l. I. tit. iii. l. 16.



the same emperor affected to give leave to ordain rustics, even without the consent of their masters\*; yet the spirit of paganism was so infused into the civil governments, that it was not till a very late period in France, that the law formally sanctioned scholastic education of the sons of peasants and mechanics, or permitted them to educate a son for the Church.

At another time, it was by a systematic plan to assume an influence and a power over ecclesiastical discipline; such appeared in the conduct of the Ghibellines of Italy, and in the doctrines of the Gallicans in France. The Ghibellines were lax in faith: in this character, Ottaviano Ubaldini, who used to be styled the cardinal, is even introduced by Dante†: their chiefs were men of an iron and despotic nature. Voigt, in his history of Gregory VII. says, that in reading the Saxon histories of Henry IV. we might imagine we were reading of Nero‡. The student of history must be on his guard, with respect to this subject, against the writings of unworthy ecclesiastics, who, like Otho Von Frisingen, because he was nephew to the sacrilegious emperor Henry V. took part with him against the Church, and wrote as an apologist for the Germans, and not as a Christian author. He must be apprised also, that there were some who were meek and holy men, like Ives of Chartres, who yet did not rightly estimate the importance of the debate between the pontiffs and the empire, respecting investitures; and who did not generously feel for Holy Church, in her combat for freedom. This was not strange, since owing to the providence of God, the first German emperors exercised the power of investiture with great piety. Germany had most holy bishops under Conrad I.,

\* Nov. Just. CXXIII. c. 17.

† Hell, X. 121.

‡ P. 256.

Henry the Fowler, the three Othos, Conrad II., and his son Henry the Black. No sooner did Henry IV. rise up, than God opposed to him his intrepid servant Gregory, who undertook not only to prevent the present sacrilege of this wicked emperor, but to abolish for ever the principle of the danger. Frederick Schlegel points out the iron character of the Ghibellines, so fearfully displayed by Henry VI. in Naples, the bloodthirsty Ezzelin in Lombardy, and even the emperor Frederick II.\* The same character, in a greater or less degree, belonged also in France to the men, who, under the name of Gallicans, were disposed to look with an eye of jealousy upon the supremacy of Rome; and in every country, and in all ages, it has distinguished that class of reasoners, who were for governing solely by the civil authority; that is, by human principles, without the intervention of the Church, and what is superhuman. The violence of the clergy of Paris, during the league, must be ascribed to the Gallican principles adopted by the university at that period. But every where such men are marked by the same hard severity of principles, the same insensibility to any mercy which would plead in opposition to a general law: like that veteran described by Tasso, of whom he says, when it is proposed to punish Rinaldo with death,

Old Raymond praised his speech, for such men think  
 They ever wisest seem when most severe :—  
 There must the rule to all disorders sink,  
 Where pardons, more than punishments appear ;  
 For feeble is each kingdom, frail and weak,  
 Unless its basis be this fear †.

Every where they shew the same disposition to exult in the execution of their legislative enactments, despising the unseen power of truth and sanctity, and

\* Philosophie der Geschichte, II. 151

† Book V. 39.

even addressing the Holy Church in words like those of Kopreus to the suppliant Heraclidæ :

*οὐ γάρ τις ἐστὶν, ὃς πάροιθ' αἰρήσεται  
τὴν σὴν ἀχρεῖον δύναμιν ἀντ' Εὐρυσθέως\*.*

Every where also they indicate the same laxity in faith, whatever may be the vehemence of their professions ; though it may resemble the zeal of those who trust the fond belief on every occasion,

That heaven  
Will truck its armour for the liliated shield †.

for they are the ready advocates of that modern wisdom, which discards all consideration of religion in its schemes of policy, and is the last to sympathise with the sufferings of a people who are oppressed by the enemies of their religion. In opposition to the Ghibellines and the Gallicans, the spirit of the Church is now acknowledged by all historians who have been favourable to the freedom and happiness of mankind. Even Machiavel is forced to observe continually, throughout his history of Florence, that the party for the Church was regarded as the maintenance of the public liberty. On this point, our English writers, who, alas ! are still the contemporaries of Cranmer, are left alone ; their continental brethren having completely abandoned their favourite positions. All are passed to the side of that Fenelon who wept over the old institutions of his country, and who recognised in the Holy See, the eternal defender of the charters of the middle age, and of the genuine liberty of nations.

In the memorable debate concerning investitures, the grand object of Gregory VII. was to behold the Church free, and the victory of the things of God

\* Eurip. Heraclid.

† Dante, Par. VI.

over those of man. The character of this illustrious pontiff breathes all the energy and self-devotedness of the ages of faith. He alone felt sorrow on being invested with the supreme authority ; “ Our promotion,” said he, “ which administers to you and to the rest of the faithful, a pious and joyful expectation, produces in us the bitterness of internal grief, and the pressure of too much anxiety\*.” In his epistle to all the Germans, he expressed himself as follows, “ to this end we feel ourselves ordained and placed in the apostolic seat, that in this life we should seek not our own, but the things of Jesus Christ, that by many labours, following the footsteps of the fathers, we may pass with the merciful aid of God to the future and eternal quiet †.” What a noble testimony was he able to bear to himself, when he said, in allusion to the emperor Henry IV., “ Never, by any prayers or manifestations of friendship or of enmity, could he obtain from us the consent to say or think any thing for his sake, contrary to justice. In this course, by the help of God, we will constantly persist so long as we shall live, not daunted by any peril of life or death ‡.” In France, the usurpation of the monarchs was often resisted by the meek men of God. In the eleventh century, when St. Gaultier, Abbot of St. Martin, at Pontoise, was installed Abbot, king Philip being present, wished to deliver to him the cross with his own hand : St. Gaultier took it, but laid hold of it at a part above the king’s hand, saying, “ Non à te sed de sursum.” I take this charge, not from you, Sire, but from God. It was said that this action of the holy man filled all the lords of the court, and even the king himself, with admiration. The holy man, however, it must be observed, had only a king of nine years old to deal

\* Epist. i. 39.

† Epist. iv. 24.

‡ Epist. v. 7.

with. The history of this controversy abounds with scenes of the highest interest, and of the utmost sublimity. Let us view for a moment these Roman pontiffs, in the presence, as it were, of the barbarous and raging kings of the earth. Such an occasion was presented at Chalons, when the ambassadors of the emperor came there to treat with Pope Paschal II. The inhabitants were filled with terror at the sight of this procession of martial troops, escorting the duke of Bavaria, before whom a naked sword was carried. He was a man of gigantic stature, and had a voice which made men tremble when he spoke. His nobles and attendants had so fierce a countenance, and bore themselves with such haughtiness, creating such a noise and confusion, that one would have thought they were going to give battle to some formidable enemy, and not to kiss the feet of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. The holy father replied to them with firmness, and in a strain of the most affecting piety; but when he had concluded, the barbarous Germans became furious, and proceeded even to address insulting words to the pontiff: but feeling that their party would not be the strongest in France, they withdrew crying out, "*Non hic sed Romæ gladiis determinabitur querela.*" A more remarkable scene followed in the very church of St. Peter, at Rome, when the emperor came there to be crowned, upon a mutual understanding with the pope, that the emperor was to relinquish his custom of investiture, and the bishops of Germany to abandon their dukedoms, marquisates, and other principalities; a proposition originating with the emperor, and eagerly approved of by the pope; but which the emperor had kept secret from his German nobles, hoping to gain all their possessions in exchange for the abandonment of a form. The emperor, after kissing the pope's feet, who received him at the portal, was seated under a royal canopy near the altar, and the pope began the

mass. Having finished the offertory, at the moment when the ceremony of the coronation was to commence, he turned to the emperor, and asked him aloud whether he was resolved to observe the treaty that had been agreed to; and if so, he begged that he would then declare his resolution publicly. The emperor, who did not expect this, appeared a little confused; but resuming his presence of mind, he rose from his seat, and said he was ready to do so, provided the prelates of Germany consented; but he must first confer with them: and accordingly, for this purpose, he withdrew into the sacristy. The result was soon known, for the Germans became furious at the first intimation of the case in agitation, and all returned into the church with great noise and tumult, declaring that they would never part with the possessions which former emperors had given to their churches. In vain did the pope attempt to appease them, by reminding them of the true glory of the Church, which was independent of such privileges. At length a gigantic warrior advanced with a fierce countenance, and addressed the pope with haughty insolence, saying, that it was for him to crown their emperor, as his predecessors had done those who were before emperors, and to make no innovations. The pope seeing himself thus treated at the foot of the altar of his church, spoke as sovereign pontiff, and said that he would never cowardly betray the interests of the Church; and then he rose up from his chair and advanced to the altar, without proceeding to the coronation, to finish the mass. The emperor greatly irritated, called out from his seat to the pope to crown him; but there was no reply or notice taken of his words. Then making a sign to his guards, they approached and surrounded the altar. The pope perceived their intention, but evinced no fear; and finished the mass with a tranquillity and presence of mind truly admirable. No sooner had



he descended to withdraw, than the emperor's guards arrested him, as well as many cardinals and bishops, a great number of priests, clerks, officers, and gentlemen who had served in different functions at the altar. In an instant a fearful noise filled the whole church. The people began to cry out on all sides, "they are taking the life the holy father!" The German soldiers drew their swords, and fell right and left upon the helpless multitude, who fled to the door, where numbers were suffocated and massacred. As the guards were dragging the pope and cardinals to a secure place near the emperor's quarters, one only of the German nobles had courage enough to speak in behalf of justice and piety. This was Conrad, Archbishop of Salzburg.

———— faithful only he :  
Among innumerable false, unmoved,  
Unshaken, unseduced, untterrify'd,  
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal.

Filled with horror on beholding the pope dragged along like a criminal, he could not keep silence, but expressed his detestation, before all the world, of such an enormous act, saying, in the ardour of his zeal, all that piety could inspire him with, unmoved by the fear of instant death, with which they threatened him ; for a German nobleman advanced with a drawn sword, and swore that he would strike him on the spot, if he continued to speak ; but the generous bishop offered him his throat, saying, "Strike if you will, let me perish rather than give room only by my silence, for any one to suppose that I approved of such an infamous action." Historians remark that St. Athanasius did not suffer more from the Arians than did this archbishop afterwards from Henry V. In vain did the German writers endeavour to excuse the emperor : all Europe was inflamed with indignation. The escapes and sufferings in the same cause

of the holy Pontiff Gelasius II. who succeeded him, would occupy too long a space, but I cannot refrain from mentioning one event. After landing at Caiëta, for he was obliged to fly from Rome in consequence of the emperor's furious return in search of him, the night being wet and tempestuous, and the castle of Ardea where he was to take refuge being two leagues distant from the spot, the venerable old man not having sufficient strength to walk, and there being no horses, the Cardinal Hugo d'Alatre, who had saved him the preceding night from the hands of the emperor, now performed an action deserving of eternal praise: for taking him upon his shoulders he carried him the entire way, and arrived in safety at midnight with his precious burden. The conception of these scenes fills us with horror as we read of them in history: how must they have affected the minds of men in ages of faith! Five centuries have not obliterated the memory among the faithful of that blow given to Boniface VIII. by the hand of a Colonna, and for five centuries have they recognised in the sterility of his vast domains the vengeance of Almighty God. Gelasius II. met his holy death in the monastery of Cluni. The multitude of monks and devout people who flocked to his funeral was almost infinite: they sought to honour the obsequies of a martyr, for in this light he was regarded, since his whole pontificate, which had lasted but a year and four days, was a continued persecution, during which, like St. Paul, he might have reckoned chains, prisons, stripes, wounds, exile, perils by land and by sea, treasons, and false brethren. In France the opposition was more systematic, but attended with less violence. The establishment of the pragmatic sanction, which the Popes had never recognised, constituted the clergy of France almost theoretically in a kind of rebellion against the holy See. This was formally abolished in the reign of Francis I. by the concordat

with Leo X., though the parliament and university were both violent in opposition to it. The theories of Gerson Almain, Jean Major, and their disciples, began to produce their fruit in the rise of the Quesnellists and Jansenists, the end of whose principles was so clearly pointed out by Fenelon. When the kings of Europe became alarmed, and began to take violent measures against the new spirit of resistance to authority, they were only reaping what they had sowed, for since two centuries they had, as it were, been conspiring against the only power which could protect them from it. While Francis I. was exercising such severity against the Protestants in France he was courting the friendship of the Protestant powers abroad, and making common cause with them; he was intimately allied with Geneva, with the eighth Henry, with the Protestant princes of Germany, and with Turkey. Charles V. finding it for his advantage that the religious disputes should cease, published the famous interim in which he made concessions that violated the rights of the holy See. Henry II. while he persecuted the Protestants in France as opposed to his crown, refused to receive the decrees of the Council of Trent with respect to discipline. Thus began the development of that artful and criminal policy carried to such perfection by Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin, and ratified in the peace of Westphalia, which separating its interests from that of religion, finished, as de St. Victor says, by persuading the people that religion itself was only a matter of policy\*. What greater contempt for religion could revolutionary agents evince than had been displayed by the government of that brave Henry, on occasion of Jean Châtel, when the Père Guignard was tortured and put to death? Did Julian ever publish a more cruel decree against the

\* *Tableau de Paris*, tom. XI. p. 1070.

Church than that of her eldest son, which closed the nine colleges of studious youth, and said to her in words that seemed like mockery, "thou needest labourers, but more thou shalt not have?" The conduct of that Louis, whose end was glory towards the holy father, relative to the sanctuary in the hotel of his ambassador, was as dangerous as it was mean and impious. "What a triumph," cries de St. Victor, "for a king of France, to prove himself more powerful than the Pope as a temporal prince, and in this respect to make no difference between him and the Dey of Algiers, or the republic of Holland. Louis, who pushed his conquests to the Rhine, after humbling the temporal princes of Christendom, resolved with the instinct of despotism, to attack freedom itself in the pontifical dignity: and for this purpose, his flatterers stirred up the affair of the *régale*. The *avocat-general* on this occasion pronounced a discourse worthy of Cromwell, and the parliament that gave to the will of the eighth Henry the force of law. This was the moment when the dragonades were exercised upon the Calvinists, and when it was resolved to revoke the edict of Nantes. Le Pere la Chaise, Jesuit and confessor of the king, opposed this latter measure as far as he was able, and it is certain that in so doing he spoke the sentiments of the Pope. The fatal articles issued from the cabinet of the *surintendant* solely in consequence of the personal pique of the great king, because the holy father had not thought proper to cringe to all his wishes. Bossuet himself confesses that this was the origin of these famous articles, the basis of the Gallican liberties. Louis nourished from infancy according to the modern system, concluded that he had at length brought the monarchal government to its perfection in himself. "The state is myself," said he, and this political egotism proved that his views were narrow, and that he had but imperfectly

understood society as it had been formed by the Catholic religion in ages of faith. The power of Christianity emanating from God, has two principal characteristics—it is universal and independent, for God cannot have two laws or two wills. It is the universality of this law, its independence, and its continual action upon intelligences, which constituted the wonderful social state called Christendom. Christianity, therefore, as an universal ruler has precepts equally obligatory on those who govern, as on those who are governed; kings and subjects live equally in its dependence and unity, and it would be a blasphemy to suppose that there could be any thing in the world independent of God. Louis, as if he had expected to reign for ever, had sacrificed the authority of the Church to the establishment of his despotism, and he died leaving his power isolated amidst all the natural resistances of society. The popular opposition gained strength under the regency, and continued to extend till the last explosion; but the agents of the revolution were not more impious in violence against the authority of the Church than the parliaments had been in 1749, on occasion of the refusal of the sacraments, and in 1754, under the succeeding Louis. Choiseul, of haughty and imperious soul, was as great an enemy to the holy See as the worst minister of Elizabeth, and it was at length reserved to the calamitous times which preceded the fall of empires to behold in the person of a German Cæsar, the chief of the conspirators against the spiritual authority. This imperial minister of a base philosophy, who shewed, perhaps, the smallest portion of sense of all the wretched men who ever bore a sceptre, descended into his grave unloved, unpitied, unrespected by his own impious advisers, and summoned as if by one voice from the brave and generous people over whom he had arrogated the spiritual authority to account for their injuries before

God. But let us hasten to more noble recollections. What a lesson has been conveyed in the history of later times to prove that neither kings nor subjects can be independent, and that the meekness of the ages of faith was after all the wisest and safest policy for them both. In France the opposition which came from kind heaven was crushed amidst shouts of victory, and at the same moment began this other opposition which comes from the cruel earth, and supplies its place. Delivered indeed from the sovereignty of Him who said that his yoke was easy and his burden light, these independent kings soon found themselves in face of the sovereignty of the people, that is to say, of a master “whose yoke breaks crowns, and who at his pleasure makes them pass from the throne to the scaffold\*.” One argument of those who condemn the doctrine of the ages of faith is, that “the condition of a Christian and a Catholic prince, was then worse than that of a heathen, for he has God alone supreme, but the other had the chief pontiff†.” Such an argument methinks is enough to make subjects reflect rather upon the real dangers to which they are exposed, than upon those that are imaginary and things of air. Let us hope that the cry of the Jewish Deicides may be no longer that of any people professing to be Christian—“non habemus Regem nisi Cæsarem;” let us hope that none may any longer rush like willing slaves to give execution to the will of some remorseless despot, in order that they may trample on the sweet and gentle yoke of Christ. And if again we look to the character of the popular power when it aspired to independence, and rejected the spiritual authority, is not the same lesson taught in terms irresistible? For who that has stu-

\* *Documens Historiques concernant la Compagnie de Jesu*, 19.

† *La Hogue de Ecclesia*, 257.



died the history of its assemblies, and that has assisted at its councils, and will not be forcibly reminded of them when he hears the poet sing of the first deliberations of those spirits that highly raged against the highest, hurling defiance towards the vault of heaven? Is it a calumnious comparison, and does history bear no witness to obdurate pride and stedfast hate? Does it record nothing of the fixed mind and high disdain, the unconquerable will and study of revenge? Nothing of immortal hate and courage never to submit or yield? Tells it of no cries like "here at least we shall be free?" Of no orators who uttered "high words that bore semblance of worth not substance." Of no countenances like that described "cruel his eye, care sat on his faded cheek, but under brows of dauntless courage and considerate pride?" Of no arguments to ridicule the power of him who reigns only "upheld by old repute, consent or custom." Of no counsels like those "who can think submission?" Let us live to ourselves free and to none accountable, preferring "hard liberty before the easy yoke of servile pomp?" The combat sung by Milton is stated by the prince opposed to angels to be "the contest between servility and freedom;" and are we to fall down in admiration at the feeble parody of still vainer mortals, because it bore no less high a title? If then so fearful a comparison be justified by the evidence of history, was such a power, we may ask, likely to legislate for the advantage of mankind? Could its influence tend to promote a freedom consistent with justice? I have not considered these liberties in relation to the interests of the Church itself, because the delusion attempted to be practised on this point is so egregious that one would feel it a needless indignity to enter upon its refutation. The sophist in Plato who thinks he can be pious while he prosecutes his own father, and affirms that piety or holi-

ness, being only a part of justice, is confined to the worship of God in temples, and that the rest concerned with the conduct of life belongs to another sphere, this sophist reasons like the moderns\*. But Socrates cuts him short by requesting to know what he means by the worship of the gods, whether like the art of dressing horses or dogs as discharged by the groom or the huntsman, it is the knowledge of exercising a certain service to the gods which confers a benefit upon them? The prince or sophist imbued with these principles, would also speak eloquently upon piety; he too would have temples and solemn psalmody, but it would be only a contrivance to save appearances in banishing God from the society of men. We have seen the steps of this famous process, and from henceforth nothing can be less uncertain than the motive which actuates it; first, religion must be separated from government; then it must be separated from literature, according to the Gallican advice of Boileau; then it must be excluded from the manners of life; the laity must leave it to the clergy, the clergy to the Jesuits, and finally the Jesuits are to be driven from the earth as opposed to the reign of liberties and legal order. "The liberties of the Gallican Church," says Fenelon, "are real servitudes†." Even Fleury acknowledged that they would furnish ample matter for a treatise upon servitude. These liberties agreed equally well with the views of Louis XIV.; of the jacobins of the first revolution; of Buonaparte; and of the present sophists, who are endeavouring to rule France exclusively in the interest of their own club at the selfish and unstable city. The real liberty of the Church opposed to these inventions is of faith, and all servitude is heretical by its essence‡. By liberties is meant

\* Ethyphro.

† Epit. cxxv. au Duc de Chevreux.

‡ Mémorial Catholique, tom. I. p. 164.

the subjection of the Church to the will of despots or of sophists who legislate against God. The Church abhors such liberty, and considers its freedom to consist in being under the dominion of those rulers who are placed over it by Christ. In this sense the word which is engraven on the walls of the cathedral of Sienna might belong as the rightful motto to every consecrated spot that acknowledges the Roman Pontiff, *Libertas*. This is a liberty which is favourable and not contrary to all just and rational civil freedom. Historians admit that down to the fifth century, while the principle of authority prevailed, the utmost liberty and activity reigned in the Church of Gaul, while the civil society was in a state of slavery and decay\*. Revolted governments decree and even oblige men to swear contrary to a matter of fact, when they affirm blindly that the Roman Pontiff "hath no jurisdiction within their realms." The power of the vicar of Christ extends necessarily wherever there are any Catholic Christians, to the palaces of emperors and kings, to the castles of nobility, to the towers of knights, to the houses of bishops, to the chambers of the poorest clerk, to the halls of the college, to the cell of the recluse, to the shop of the mechanic, to the hut of the shepherd. Long and uninterruptedly has it been adored in lands where human legislators, in the pride of their collective wisdom, decreed that it had past away for ever—loved has it been, and submitted to with filial meekness by succeeding generations,

——— Who for the testimony of truth have borne  
Universal reproach, far worse to bear  
Than violence; for that was all their care,  
To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds  
Judged them perverse. ———

One word more to those who are jealous of the ex-

\* Guizot Cours. d'Hist.

ercise of the spiritual power. The wisdom of the ancient world, as expressed by some of the sages who collected the traditions of the human race, and the sense of the universal reason, may often cause to blush men who fall far short of it, though under the light of that heavenly revelation which has purified those traditions, and given security and permanence to that sense. Socrates concludes a discourse on government with these words:—"I say then this, expecting indeed opposition, but nevertheless I say it, compelled by truth, that neither a city nor a state, nor a man, can ever be perfect, until to these few real lovers of wisdom who are not evil men though they are called useless, a certain necessity from fortune should fall, that whether they wish it or not, they may take the management of the state, and that the people of the state may be subject to them, or else until to the sons of those kings who at present exercise the sovereign power in states, or to those kings themselves should fall the true love of the true philosophy from a certain inspiration of God\*. Until then the love of wisdom and political power shall be united in the same men, there can be no cessation of evils to a state, nor, I think, to the human race; nor can a perfect republic be born under any other circumstances, or see the light of the sun†." Does not this celebrated sentence of the Homer of philosophers, seem almost like a prophetic vision of what afterwards did actually occur during the ages of faith, when a certain necessity from God did fall upon the true lovers of wisdom, obliging them against their wills to take the management of states, and when to kings themselves did fall the true love of the true wisdom from a certain inspiration of God? "I do not say that this is impossible," to resume the discourse of Socrates, "for if so we should deservedly

\* Plato's *Repub.* VI. 138.† *Id.* lib. V.

be objects of ridicule as saying vain things resembling vows. It is not impossible that this should be, though it must be confessed we speak of things most difficult; and if such a necessity shall hereafter fall upon them in any barbarous region far removed from our view, it will then be easy to shew that this perfect state can exist, when that Muse shall become mistress of the city\*." A state of perfect order and exemption from evil, is incompatible with the existence of a race of creatures who are placed upon earth as upon a stage of combat, to make proof of fidelity to their Maker: the supposition that such a state would result from the circumstances demanded, is only a proof that the sage who had indulged in it, had never understood the real nature of their difficulties, nor the true end of their existence; but his speculation is still a sublime and magnificent testimony to the wisdom of that spiritual government which had so wide an influence in the ages of faith, and the facts of history which shew a cessation of so many evils, and of so much misery in states, and to the human race resulting from it, prove, far beyond what he had ever any reason to expect, the extent of its moral advantages.

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#### CHAPTER · IV.

FROM the spiritual let us pass to the temporal government of these ages, and view it with regard to the principles of the meek. In the Church as we have seen all was obedience and liberty. Hence a twofold influence was exercised by the clergy;

\* Lib. VI.

for while they consoled the lower ranks by their doctrines of independence and evangelical equality, they gave strength to rulers by their principles of subordination ; their language might have seemed contradictory without being the less sincere. As a French writer observes, “ the priest was near the sovereign to remind him of the equal rights of the children of Adam, and the preference which the Redeemer granted to the poor ; and this same priest was near the people to preach submission, and to induce them for conscience sake to render to Cæsar what belonged to Cæsar.” Religion in these ages, as Bonald observes, “ placed as the foundation of the public laws of every Christian people, active obedience for good and passive resistance to evil, whereas the modern doctrines inculcate passive obedience and active resistance, and place man perpetually between slavery and rebellion \*.” St. Thomas says, “ that wisdom and power are companions of true religion.” Christianity sanctioned the possession and exercise of power, the necessity of which is so obvious to reason, for

Whoso upon himself will take the skill  
True justice unto people to divide,  
Had need have mightie hands for to fulfil,  
That which he doth with righteous doom decide,  
And for to maister wrong and puissant pride †.

It is an axiom of political science, that when a general power does not exist, every one attempts to establish his own particular power, in which event excess of liberty, as Plato says, will always lead to servitude ‡ : for the doing any thing over-much is sure to produce the contrary effect, in times, and in plants, and in bodies, and in political states no less,

\* Législation Prim. 108.

† Spenser, book V. 4.

‡ Epist. viii.



and therefore a tyranny both private and public results always from an excess of liberty\*. But religion did not, according to the theory of Bentham, recognize, in policy, an authority superior to all others, which does not receive the law, but which gives it, remaining mistress of the rules themselves; a maxim which Bonald justly denominates false, servile, and abject: but it declared in the language of Bossuet, that the most absolute power is regulated by fundamental laws, against which, whatever is done, is null of itself. Among the nations that worshipped Christ, in ages of faith, it would not have been thought a subject of praise to resemble that "free people" in *Æschylus*, of whom *Pelagus* says to the supplicants, that they "love to tax authority with blame †." Still less would it have been deemed wise to encourage them to do so. The authority of *Paschal* is here against the modern sophists: "all the opinions of the people," he says, "are very sound, yet they are not in their heads, because they believe that truth is where it is not. Truth is, indeed, in their opinions; but not in the point where they imagine it to be: it is their sentiments, their feelings which are sound and true. Their folly is made the foundation of the security of states and thrones; for kings and magistrates are strong only in the opinion which they raise by external marks of power. The greatest and most important thing in the world, has thus for its foundation, weakness; and this foundation is admirably sure; for there is nothing surer than that the people will be weak: what is founded on reason alone, is very ill founded, as the esteem of wisdom. ‡." It is a mistake to suppose that the wise and heroic ancients placed any moral dignity in the spirit of resistance to just autho-

\* *Plato de Repub. VIII.*† *Æschyl. Suppl.*‡ *Pensées, I. part viii.*

rity. Epictetus says, that it is decorous to yield obedience to a ruler or prince\*. The preference of all the followers of Socrates for the state of Sparta, is well known, not from the supposition that all forms of government were united in its constitution, but because as Müller says, “the animating soul of all these forms was the Doric spirit of fear and respect for ancient and established laws, and the judgment of elder men; the spirit of obedience towards the state and the constituted authorities, *πειθαρχία*, and the conviction that discipline and a restriction of actions are surer guides to safety, than a superabundance of strength and activity directed to no certain end. “We moderns,” says Müller, “on account of our preconceived notions with respect to the advancement of civilization, do not read, without partiality, the lessons which history affords us: we refuse to recognize the most profound political wisdom in an age, which we believe to have been occupied in rude attempts to form a settled government. Far otherwise the political speculators of antiquity, such as the Pythagoreans, and Plato, who considered the Spartan and Cretan form of government, i. e. the ancient Dorian, as a general model of all governments; whereas the Athenian and Ionic democracy, Plato altogether despises as an annihilation of government, rather than a government, in which every person striving to act as much as possible for himself, destroyed the unison and harmony of the whole†.” Nothing is more celebrated than the loyalty of the middle ages, which was an obedience of the heart. Their history derives from it a brilliant page which is familiar to all who have been trained to gentle studies. While attacked, like every other principle of good, by cold and bitter sophistry, this charac-

\* Sententiæ.

† Hist. of the Dorians, vol. iii. 9.

teristic of ancient manners, has generally been admired by modern writers of genius. The loyal attachment of Tasso to the duke of Ferrara, has been represented in glowing terms by Goëthe, and made the occasion of delivering a formal eulogium upon the virtue of chivalrous fidelity\*.

The Church lent her sanction to the spirit of obedience towards the prince or government of the state, and by her daily prayers admonished the people that submission was a religious duty, and at the same time, she took occasion to teach important lessons, both to people and to kings. St Paul, that true apostle of the nations, since he teaches the science of society, commanded that especial prayer should be made for kings, and for all who are placed in authority; and St. Augustin supplied this comment, "because they are at a greater distance from Christian humility, by reason of the pomp and pride of their estate;" and, therefore, the apostle adding that it is well before God our Saviour, to pray for such men, concludes thus, "In order that no one may despair before our God, who wishes the salvation of all men; and that truth may come to the knowledge of all; who wishes to exclude no rank, but who chooses whom he pleaseth in all classes of society, indifferently†." No inference was to be drawn from her prayers, with respect to the justice or injustice of the princes who governed. Following the apostolic precept, she offered constant prayers for the safety of the civil rulers, though these might be heathens, in order that there might be even a temporal peace for her children. "As long as the two cities are confounded together here below," says the venerable Bede, "the peace of Babylon is also our peace. The people of God are enfranchised from the domination of the profane city, only on con-

\* Torquato Tasso, by Goethe.

† Enchirid. cap. xxiv.

dition of finishing this pilgrimage within its walls, and the goods of this world are common to the just and to the wicked\*.” “The Church,” says the angelic doctor, “has a peace peculiar to herself, a peace which cannot be communicated to the impious; but besides this peace, there is another, common to the just and to sinners, and the Church has also need of this peace†.” The decree of the second session of the Council of Trent, assigns for the motive of ordering prayers for kings, “the tranquillity of the Church, its peace, and the augmentation of the faith.” So when the Roman Church implores heaven for the person of the emperor, it is in order “that the enemies of peace being put down, Christian liberty may offer to God, in security, the glory which he demands from it‡.” When, at another time, she desires that principalities and powers may recognize her divine authority, it is in order that her children may accomplish in peace the work of their salvation§. If she prays to be delivered from obstacles that might retard her course, it is that being disengaged from all bonds, she may fulfil with liberty the divine will||. If she prays for spiritual blessings, she no less demands temporal aid, in order that her children may be delivered from the perils of this life¶.”

It should be observed, that in these ages, all persons in authority were regarded with real respect, by those above them, as well as by their inferiors. Even in the persons of men, objects of veneration were multiplied. The mayor of a little town was not looked upon differently by the great and by the

\* Interpret. in Epist. i. ad Tim.

† Commentar. in Epist. i. ad Tim.

‡ Missale Rom. Orat pro Imperat.

§ Orat. fer. VI. in parasceve.

|| Orat. Dom. XIX. post Pent.

¶ Orat. fer. VI. post. Dom. IV. quadr. Dom. XXIII. post Pent.

poor. Indeed, in France, royal power became jealous of the dignity, so that there was no mayor of Paris, Lyons, or Toulouse. On the election of these magistrates, grand entertainments used to be given, as also when they returned from an annual pilgrimage or procession. The sheriffs of the municipalities used to be addressed with "Monseigneur." Society was then inexhaustible in supplying men to exercise these municipal authorities, who were truly respectable, like those citizens of the Flemish towns who came to Paris, of whom Victor Hugo says, "personages who all bore written on their countenances, that Maximilian of Austria had reason, as he said, "de se confier à plein en leurs sens, vaillance, expérience, loyaultez, et bonnes preudomies." "The reverence or contempt shewn to magistrates," says John of Salisbury, "passes to the honour or reproach of subjects; hence it is that in the constitutions of princes and edicts of magistrates, by a prolepsis, there is a conception of many persons, that it may seem to be not so much the constitution of one person as of the whole community \*". In ages of faith, there was less reason to complain in the words of Tacitus, that all things were done servilely for the sake of rule †. Religion taught men that the office of all social ministry was a service, according to the divine word "Let him that would be the greatest among men become their servant." "Sublime words," adds Bonald, "which passed into all Christian languages, when the highest civil functions were denominated always a service." The emperor Charles says, in a letter to Petrarch, "you know not the burden of empire: we who are charged with it feel this truth. It is love for mankind alone that can surmount the difficulties of government." King Charles VII. would have preferred being a private

\* De Nugis Curialium, lib. V. cap. 4.

† Hist. lib. I.

knight, a Dunois, a Poton, a La Hire, or a Xaintrailles. "Every thing," says Bonald, "concur to prove that in the middle ages, there were only public functions, no titles purely personal, functions to maintain the welfare of society, and no titles to amuse the vanity and self-love of individuals. Those personal titles which indicate weakness of soul, were unknown to the Sieurs de Joinville, Duguesclin, Clisson, and Bayard, who were only distinguished in private life, by the religious denomination given to them in baptism, and in public life by the political denomination of the office they discharged. When the person became distinguished to the ear by a pompous title, he wished to be distinguished also to the eye by exterior marks, not by the habits belonging to public functions which commanded respect, because they announced a duty, but by ribands and medallions, pure decorations of the person, which wound the sentiments of men, because they have no relation to any duty, and arise from no social motive\*." Men would then have shrunk from a dignity which would not have had a just foundation. It is in the spirit of those ages, that the poet cries,

The scorne of knighthood and trew chivalrye,  
 To thinke without desert of gentle deed  
 And noble worth, to be advanced hye,  
 Such prayse is shame :————

Plato well describes the insane ardour of wicked men, who desire by all means possible to get hold of the helm of the government in a state, being convinced that the getting possession of it and the attaining to the art necessary to manage it, are incompatible, and that the essential thing is to get possession of it†; and being full of disdain and

\* Législation prim. II. 309

† De Repub. lib. VI.



anger for all who endeavour to teach that the art is necessary, and that it may be acquired by learning. "In that city," he says, "the government will be best and most secure from revolution, where they who are to govern have the least desire to rule: in this happy state, the rich only will govern: but what kind of rich men? they who are rich οὐ χρυσίου, ἀλλ' οὗ δεῖ τὸν εὐδαίμονα πλουτεῖν, ζωῆς ἀγαθῆς τε καὶ ἔμφρονος \*." The history of the middle ages abounds with instances to verify this observation. Such was the scene presented at the memorable assembly of Etampes, when king Louis-le-jeune, and the nobles of France resolved upon departing for the holy land. On the third day, after invoking the Holy Ghost, and hearing a discourse of St. Bernard respecting the qualities which should be possessed by whoever was elected regent during the king's absence, the king choose to wave his right of nomination, and leave it to the decision of the princes and prelates of the kingdom. These retired into a neighbouring hall, and after half an hour's deliberation returned with St. Bernard, having chosen two regents, a layman and an ecclesiastic, the Count de Nevers and the Abbot Suger. The king and every one approved of the choice; but no persuasion could overcome the resolution of the Count de Nevers to decline the honour. This prince was a man of great piety; and being pressed to assign his reasons, he confessed that he had resolved and vowed to enter into the Carthusian order: wonderful example to confound the pride and ambition of a court. Thus the Abbot Suger remained sole regent of France, and he accepted the dignity only on compulsion. The princes and the prelates declared that they would elect no one else, and still he refused till he was commanded by the pope to accept the charge, for the good of the kingdom †. Nothing can be

\* Id. lib. VII.

† Hist. de Suger, lib. VI.

more affecting than the letters of this great man to the king, pressing him to return, and expressing his own fatigues and sufferings. "Senex eram, sed in his magis consenui pro quibus nullo penitus modo, nisi amore Dei et vestro me consumpsissem." The crime of usurpation was rare. Pepin, the son of Charles Martel, and Hugues Capet were not usurpers; they had every sanction which the provisions of the age required. The infant Don Fernando, was seen encompassed with glory, and endowed by heaven with many crowns, for refusing to accept that which was offered to him, belonging to his nephew. The infant James of Aragon, refused the crown, though against the will of his father, and preferred a religious life in a cloister. Instances of this kind are endless. In these ages, the magisterial character and office were in harmony with the spiritual tone of society. A painting of the crucifixion was placed in the centre of the great chamber of the parliaments\*, and over the seats of justice. Those vast solemn paintings of holy subjects, done in the thirteenth century on the walls of the great hall at Sienna, in which the grand council of the republic used to assemble, are, in reality, an evidence of the tone of government. There you see the adoration of the shepherds, and along with a heavenly portrait of our blessed lady, the saints of Sienna, St. Bernardin, and St. Catherine. The almost sacerdotal gravity of the judicial office might be inferred from the expression which occurs in one of the capitularies of Charlemagne. "Let no count hold his plaids, unless he be fasting and fed with sense†." The plaids were the *placita generalia*, a kind of council. The duties of the town sheriff indicate the humane influence of the municipal governments: he had to visit the

\* Monteil, Hist. des François, tom. IV. 155.

† Ann. 803. bal. I. col. 393.

round of the walls at night, to see that the watch had sufficient firing; he had to inspect the provisions destined for the poor. John de Vienne, the old governor of Calais, in the time of Edward III. is represented weeping for the calamities of its inhabitants, and speaking of them as if they were his children. By the canons of the council of Arles, in the year 314, those of the faithful who became governors of provinces, were to receive letters of communion, in order that the bishop of the place of their residence, might have a watch over them, and might excommunicate them if they did any thing contrary to discipline; and by the canons of the council of Mâcon, in the year 585, judges are forbidden to decide any thing respecting widows and orphans, without having previously consulted with the bishop, their natural protector, or in his absence, with one of his priests. We can collect the character of these men, from what is witnessed on their vaulted graves. In the collegiate church of Fouju, was a tomb with an inscription of the date of the thirteenth century, which only stated that it was of a holy man, who was versed in jurisprudence.

*Foujucii lumen, pietatis gemma; volumen  
Justitiæ, cinere jacet hic: Deus, huic miserere!  
Stephanus hic lenis fuit, et miserator egenis:  
Virtus vera Dei noxia tollat ei. Amen.*

The magistrates of the ancient Catholic states had been generally tried in pleasure and pain, like gold in the fire, as Socrates had wished; so that afterwards they were not men to change their opinion in labours or terrors or in any vicissitude whatever\*. Plato would have been satisfied also with the absence of all base inducements to desire power: his maxim was, that if men in authority who governed the state,

\* Plato de Repub. VI.

should avowedly receive rewards for governing, they are hirelings; if they take things secretly, they are thieves; if they govern for the sake of honours, they are lovers of honours; whom he thus reckons among hirelings and thieves. In Christian states, good men, compelled by charity to assume offices of power, were, indeed, entitled to receive payment, to enable them to support the proper dignity, and to facilitate the exercise of their duties; but it was not a payment in proportion to the extent of their service. Down to the fifteenth century, the counsellors of the parliament of Paris, those high judges who were entrusted with the reformation of the laws, who received officially the compliments of the pope, to whom princes of the blood shewed reverence, who disposed of the sovereignty of provinces, received only fifteen sous per day. Those of the parliament of Bordeaux had no more, and those of the parliament of Thoulouse had scarcely the half of it\*. A cloak for the winter, and another for the summer, were added to the moderate allowance of the presidents of justice. In Spain the high offices of state were entirely unconnected with emolument; and even in England, the institution of the magistracy still retains this noble feature of the middle ages. Kings themselves, as may be still seen in Spain and Italy, lived in a plain and simple manner, without great personal expense: often their sons were trained to the discipline of common rustic youths. Charlemagne and St. Louis dressed like their subjects and lived like them: even bad princes, in those days, were frugal. Charles VII. of France did not expend more than sixty livres per day; and Louis XI. was never dressed in cloth of gold but once in his life, and that was to entertain the constable, Saint Pol; and he told him so.

\* Monteil, *Hist. des François*, IV. 18.

History is full of examples of the grave and holy manners of men in authority, during the ages of faith, of men truly endowed with patriotism and heroic devotion, *qui pro multis perire malunt quam cum multis*\*. Instances may be taken as they occur, for each is the representative of an entire class of men: they appear early in the history of Christendom. Jovin, Citizen of Rheims, and a Christian, made consul by the Romans under the emperors Valens and Valentinus, became a model of heroism, justice, and piety. His tomb was one of the finest monuments at Rheims, in the Church of the Abbey of St. Nicaise, which was built on the spot where his palace formerly stood, it being the house in which St. Remi concluded his treaty with Clovis, in the name of his flock. Machiavel thus describes John de Medicis: "He died generally regretted on account of his great virtues: he was charitable, not waiting till the poor should come to him, but going out to search for them: he loved men; he praised virtue; and he had compassion upon the wicked. He never aspired to honours and enjoyed them all: he used never to go to the palace excepting when he was called thither; he was always the friend of peace; with one hand he supported the unhappy, and with the other he pushed forwards those who prospered: his only passion was for the public good; he was affable: his words were full of sense, but he had no eloquence. He died rich in renown, and in the love of his fellow-countrymen †."

The Catholic magistrates of France, down to very late times, were men of learning and constant study, of simple and even austere habits. John Rotrou, the old French poet, having an authority under the French government at Dreux, in the days of Cardinal Mazarine, spent his time between the exercise of his duty,

\* Cicero ad Herennium, lib. IV. 44.

† Hist. of Florence, lib. IV.

prayer and study; in a spirit of religion he refused to leave the town of Dreux in 1650, during a contagion which carried off every person that was attacked by it. The lieutenant-general was absent. The mayor was dead, and he was advised to withdraw; but he replied that he would never abandon the inhabitants who were confided to him. "It is true," he wrote to a friend, "the danger is great, since at the very moment while I am writing, the bells are tolling for the twenty-second person who has died this day. They shall toll for me when it pleases God \*." What greatness of soul was shewn by these men when victims to political enemies. In the reign of Charles VI., John Desmarets, falsely accused of being an accomplice to the disorders in Brittany, was drawn to the scaffold. "Master John," some one said to him, "cry mercy of the king that he may pardon you." Desmarets replied, "I served King Philip, his grandfather, King John, and King Charles his father, well and loyally, and never had these three kings occasion to grant it to me, and neither has the present if he had knowledge of man. To God alone I will cry mercy." Sir Thomas More, the last Catholic chancellor of England, shewed equal magnanimity at his death. Much may be learned from hearing the instructions which used to be addressed to magistrates and persons in authority. About the year 798, Theodulf, Bishop of Orleans, was sent by Charlemagne with Leidrade into the Narbonnaise, to observe and reform the administration of these provinces. On his return, he composed a poem entitled, "*Parænesis ad iudices, or exhortations to judges.*" It opens with a religious discourse, then follow the praise of Charlemagne, a description of their journey, a view of the danger to which magistrates are exposed, and a warning to avoid bribes

\* Goujet, Bibliothèque Française, tom. xvi. 136.



and corruption. It is full of passages breathing the tenderest humanity. Witness this :—

Qui patre seu matre orbatur, vel si qua marito,  
 Istorum causas sit tua cura sequi :  
 Horum causiloquus, horum tutela maneto ;  
 Pars hæc te matrem noverit, illa virum ;  
 Debilis, invalidus, puer, æger, anusve senexve  
 Si veniant, fer opem his miserando piam ;  
 Fac sedeant qui stare nequit, qui surgere prende ;  
 Cui cor, voxque tremit, pesque, manusque, juva ;  
 Dejectum verbis releva, sedato minacem ;  
 Qui timet, huic vires, qui furit, adde metum.

In more recent times, a certain seigneur of Spain, lieutenant of Seville, had written to the celebrated father J. de Avila, requesting advice as to the conduct he ought to observe in the exercise of his office. The idea which was then entertained of the magisterial duties may be collected from the following reply\*. “ Great is the error of those who think that the principal affair of a good government consists in restoring and maintaining the walls of the city, paving the streets, providing for the markets, laying in stores, punishing crimes, and giving justice to all who demand it at the tribunals. These things are good and necessary, but not alone sufficient; the last end of a Christian government should be to promote the Christian virtues of the people, to remove obstacles to salvation of souls, and to contribute to extend the love and honour of God. The government, therefore, can only be good when it is founded upon love : as for the punishment of crimes, this is a sad and miserable office, the necessity of which should be removed if possible. God has compassion even in his vengeance†, and the Son of God wept for Jerusalem that was to be destroyed; and since the Creator inclines to compassion, much more ought a

\* Spiritual Letters of de Avilla, Epist. xlv.

† Isai. i.

mortal judge when he condemns another man, like to himself or perhaps less vicious. It is not reasonable that he should sleep the night before passing sentence of death, but he ought to spend it in sighs and prayers, beseeching our Lord to console, strengthen, and compassionate this his poor brother, to whom he is obliged to give the pain of condemnation: he is bound to act thus in such cases, both to satisfy his duty to his neighbour, and also in order to propitiate the mercy of God for himself, when he shall appear before the divine tribunal. Love therefore is required both to prevent and to punish crimes. Moreover, the governor should consult with holy men; for as the Scripture saith, "The soul of a holy man sometimes announceth true things more than seven watchmen seated on high\*." In the Council of Chalons, it is enjoined to all who govern the people, that they should take counsel of bishops in affairs of importance, and in doubtful cases. The Emperor Justinian commanded this to be done, and the ancient kings of Castille have always observed it, one of whom demanded of the bishops, assembled in the council of Toledo, that they would give him laws by which he might govern his kingdom well, and they gave them to him. It is not because bishops have a great knowledge of human laws, but because of the celestial light which results from the contemplation of God, by means of which, they acquire a knowledge superior to all human prudence. The governor should also study parts of the holy Scripture, and above all, the New Testament; and also he should read passages from the holy councils and the pastoral of St. Gregory; for there is much to learn from these even with respect to temporal government. The governor should also read the lives of the saints, not only out of curiosity, but for his

\* Eccles. xxxvii.

own advancement in the science of the saints, and by so doing he will not lose, but on the contrary, he will gain time, to govern himself and others. It will be well also that some good monk should speak to the governor once a week, or at least once a month, and oftener during the holy time of Lent. The governor should charge his officers to beware of requiring oaths in cases of temptation and doubt, lest they should give rise to perjury, which will be to oppose the great end of all government; he should be most careful to provide at the expense of the city, good masters for the schools of the poor; and for this purpose he should cause them to hear the charge of some good monks, and he should reward the best masters by inviting them to dine at his table, shewing humility after the example of our Lord, who did not disdain to wash the feet of his poor disciples. In great cities many children of ten years and upwards, spend Sundays and festivals at play without hearing mass; and it is a great pity to see them afterwards when grown up publicly committing mortal sin. When the children do go, the churches are full of elder people, who are angry at the disturbances which always attend a collection of children. There should be therefore a church on purpose for this little people, and sergeants should go about the streets to collect the little stragglers and lead them to the church, where some good priest after mass should instruct them in their duties. Great care should be taken that the streets of the city, and places of public resort should present no danger to the eyes of unguarded youth, and above all, no profit should accrue to the city from the lives of vicious and miserable men. Prisons should be attended to, and no delay suffered, and justice should be quick in execution. All persons employed in offices should be devout and fearing God. The bull-fights are things very dangerous for the conscience of him who

gives orders or leave to have them; and many learned men think that it is a mortal sin. Let the governor then do his duty, and if he cannot prevent the evil, at least he will deliver his own soul from the danger. Lastly, it is right that the governor should shew reverence to the Church and to ecclesiastics, not considering how indeed we are unworthy, but having regard to our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires that all who approach him should be treated with respect\*. A great distinction between the character of men in public stations in these ages and in our time, is the circumstance that they rather disdained than desired the talent of oratory and of public speaking. We have heard Machiavel record of John de Medicis, that he was not eloquent; in the Homeric style, we might say of him, such were his qualities ἀγορῇ δέ τ' ἀμείνονές εἰσι καὶ ἄλλοι†. It was rather in praise of a public man, as it had been of a Homeric hero, that he was easily vanquished in a debate of words: and perhaps even of a Christian or a philosopher it is but little to say in commendation, that he resembles the son of Andremon, the best of the Ætolians.

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ἀγορῇ δέ ἐ παῦροι Ἀχαιῶν  
νίκων, ὅππότε κοῦροι ἐρίσσειαν περὶ μύθων.‡

Be this as it may, it is certain that in ages of faith, society was not exposed to the danger arising from a multitude of orators. The public men were simple, learned, holy, intrepid, who thought it enough to know that as Homer says, “It is a Deity who presides over the assemblies of men §,” or as Pindar says, that popular assemblies ἀγοραὶ βουλευαφόροι are ruled by the same divine power which guides the

\* Id. Epist. xlv.

† Il. XVIII. 106.

‡ Il. XV. 283.

§ Od. II. 69.

ships on the ocean and the war of armies on the land\*. There was, indeed, the rhetoric of Louis de Grenada, a masterly work thoroughly Christian, which seems as if it had been composed expressly for such men: but after all, in opposition to Cicero, it may be greatly questioned whether that which the Greeks called philosophy would ever be the mother of what is generally considered eloquence†. Epictetus names as two things opposed to each other, and which cannot be united together, an orator and a philosopher‡. In the choice of public functionaries, men of these latter times suppose that talents alone are to be regarded; but in the middle ages, fidelity and probity were considered of more importance; for it was thought that a good will is always the first quality and the most indispensable, which of itself could give aptitude to the most moderate talents, and discernment to the understanding. Another observation to be suggested here is, that these ages knew not that prodigious and fearful multiplication of public offices in a state which is found to arise from these new political principles, which impose upon a government the obligation of interfering with every thing, and of directing every thing, agriculture, commerce, the arts, public education, the care of the sick and of the poor§. Proceeding to speak of the sovereign dignity it may be remarked in the first place, that hereditary sovereignty was the work of Christianity: the elective alone was known to pagan Europe||. Homer's sense of legitimacy is, indeed, seen in Agamemnon's sceptre σκῆπτρον πατρώϊον¶. But the invention that a king never dies, admirable

\* Olymp. XII.

† De Oratore, I. 3.

‡ Manuale, cap. xxvi.

§ De Haller, Restaurat. de la Science Politique, tom. III. cap. xlvii.

|| Chateaub. Discours. Hist. tom. III. cxliv.

¶ Il. II. xlv.

invention to secure peace and an undisturbed permanence of government, belongs to the wisdom of the pastors of the Church, who even according to the admission of Gibbon, were the founders of the Christian monarchies. The fourteenth Louis, on his death-bed had forebodings of what would follow from his system of absolute power. "What will become of my kingdom when I shall be no more?" said this unfortunate prince. In the middle ages the death of a king was not attended with danger to the state, for there was nothing personal or isolated in government. In fact, the rights and powers of kings differed from those of subjects who had possessions, only in their degree not in their nature, so that there was not one which other men did not also enjoy although in a more confined circle\*. The kings of Spain were so subject to the laws, that the domaine in causes of royal patrimony had to run the same fortune as the goods of the least subject, and was condemned in every doubtful case. The judges in the presence of Philip IV. gave sentence against him, and he submitted†. All kingdoms and patrimonial estates were little in their beginnings; such were the original monarchies of Arabia, Egypt, Palestine, and Asia Minor, India, Greece, Italy, Germany, Spain, and Gaul. It is not just to fix our attention exclusively on the evils resulting from so minute a division, without attending also to its advantages, among which may be reckoned the non-employment of mercenaries and subalterns, as also many circumstances favourable to the freedom of the people, such as the absence of taxes, since kings having their possessions were not obliged to extort money from their subjects. The charm of variety

\* De Haller, Restaur. de la Science Pol. tom. I. 16, tom. II. 25. 27, 28.

† Savreda, I. 236.



in this respect was highly characteristic of the middle ages. Germany and Switzerland were composed of more than two hundred states, ecclesiastical and secular, monarchal and republican. In general nothing could be more natural and gentle than the assumption of kingly power in these ages. The honour which Pindar ascribes to the Locrians, that they were never governed by foreigners as sovereigns \*, would not then have been a distinction. The modern transfers of a whole people to a foreign king without any stipulations or provision to protect their ancient interests, not even their religion, are to be ascribed, as De Haller observes, to the new philosophic principles, to the system so much extolled of the revolutionary uniformity. What has been already seen in relation to the lower branches of administration, in which all office of authority was a service, continues to be witnessed in the doctrine of the royal power. Thus John of Salisbury says, “a prince differs from a tyrant in being obedient to the law, and in governing the people by its dictates; for being its minister, he is preferred before all others, since bearing the burdens of all he serves to the advantage and utility of every man †; and it is certain by the authority of the divine law, that the prince is subject to the law of justice ‡. Vain is the censure of laws if they do not bear the image of the divine law, and the constitution of the prince is useless if it is not conformable to ecclesiastical discipline §. With our Christian princes, Theodosiuses and Leos, their deeds are incitements to virtue, and their words are so many institutions of manners. The prince must beware of pride, and must remember that his subjects are his brethren. Without humility, discretion, and charity, a principality cannot subsist.

\* Olymp. IX.

† Id. cap. iv.

‡ De Nugis Curialium, IV. cap. i.

§ Id. vi.

Whoever therefore loves the rank of his own elevation, let him be humble; for he who departs from the works of humility, falls by the weight of tumour from the height of his dignity\*. A prince like any other man, must not seek his own; he must protect the good by severity tempered with mercy towards the wicked, the correction of whom should be felt as the cutting off of his own limbs†. He must decline neither to the right hand nor to the left, neither by excessive benignity nor extreme severity; by justice and innocence thrones stand, but on account of wickedness kingdoms are transferred to others. Read all history, and you will find that the seed of wicked and proud princes has soon been cut off; only to good princes do sons succeed in long and happy order: there is no resisting this decree: the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it‡.” “A tyrant,” he says again, “is one who oppresses the people by a violent domination; a prince is one who governs by the laws: and law is a gift of God, the form of equity, the rule of justice, the image of the divine will, the guardian of safety, the union and consolidation of people, and the destruction of vice. Whoever opposes the law opposes grace and provokes God to battle. A prince fights for the law and for the liberty of the people; a tyrant thinks he has done nothing unless he make void the law and reduce the people to servitude; a prince is a certain image of the Deity, and a tyrant is the representative of Lucifer§.” Against the evils of a tyranny these ancient kingdoms were provided in a manner suitable to their faith. They did not think it enough to attack it in the head of the state: they looked for its roots and fibres through even the lowest ranks of society. “Tyranny is a common vice,” says John of Salisbury, “for as soon as men

\* Cap. vii.

† Cap. viii.

‡ Cap. xii.

§ Id. lib. VII. cap. xvii.

gain power of any kind, they may establish one ; for though all men cannot have kingdoms and principalities, yet from the crime of tyranny there is no one or but few wholly free ; for while ambition instigates and injustice rages, the birth of tyranny follows of necessity \*,” and the mechanic in his shop, and the fisherman in his boat, may each exercise a tyranny. St. Thomas Aquinas says of a democracy, that thus a whole people may be as one tyrant, “*populus totus erit quasi unus tyrannus* †.” It was in vain to think of securing a legitimate monarchy unless the people were to be formed by the principles of Christian meekness : this is the purport of the advice of John of Salisbury. “The world is overwhelmed with the waters of iniquity, but the rivers of Paradise are sweet with an infusion of the wood of the cross and they bear refreshment and health to souls. These also give liberty and prevent the incursion of all tyranny or punish it. ‘*Non ergo vanæ vires, sed veritas liberat in æquitate consistens, et licet vanitas promittat liberationem, vere liberi nequaquam sunt, nisi quos filius liberavit.*’ Distinguish the liberty of nature, of grace, and of glory, and you will find that none of them proceeds from vanity, and there can be no condition more servile than that of the tyrant himself ; for if where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, he must indeed be oppressed with wretched slavery whom that Spirit doth not govern ‡.” The precautions, therefore, to secure freedom were not superficial, absurd and pernicious, like those of earlier or later times. Where these great principles on which they rested are wanting, the vague desire of a liberty of which no exact idea is ever formed, leads men to commit a thousand acts of

\* De Nugis Curialium, lib. VII. cap. xvii.

† De Regim. Princip. I.

‡ Lib. VIII. cap. xvi.

folly, and to appear more like children or insane persons than creatures possessing reason and a title to moral dignity. History abounds with examples; witness that disposition of the Athenian people represented by the old poet, which made them ascribe every action to the desire of setting up a tyranny. If a man were buying fish in the market, and asked for a sea bream, a scarce fish, instead of a loach which was plentiful, the stall woman would cry out that he was for a tyranny. If a man buy anchovies and want leek to dress them with—

The herb woman with eyes askew regards him,  
And what! says she, you want a leek! friend, do ye?  
Marry come up! you are not for a tyranny  
I hope \*.

In Catholic states men were not obliged to support through the love of freedom that monstrous and pernicious principle which requires every individual in society to become a politician and retailer of news, a character to which our English Sophocles applies the epithet of base, and which seemed to a wise people of antiquity as deserving of punishment, because it tended to produce novelty and change, and a multitude of offences and evils †. Scotti has well shewn that the study of politics when become too common, and permitted to youth superficially instructed, endangers both religion and the state ‡. Men trusted not their freedom to the voice of sophists, who as Tacitus says, “ut imperium evertant, libertatem proferunt, si impetraverint ipsam aggrediuntur §.” They trusted it not to the rise of some great Marcellus “in every petty factious villager.” Even

\* Aristoph. *Vespæ*, Mitchell's Translat.

† Plutarch de *Curiositate*.

‡ *Teoremi di Politica Cristiana*.

§ *Annal. XVI.*

their most loved poets had taught them better things.

Ah, people ! thou obedient still shouldst live,  
And in the saddle let thy Cæsar sit,  
If well thou markedst that which God commands\*.

But their precautions were solid, natural, and efficacious. De Haller remarks, that Aristotle † after proposing the most odious artifices, and the most revolting to strengthen tyranny, passes in silence over all the just and natural means of preserving a legitimate domination ‡. Sophists in their pride of intellect are guilty of the same extravagance in the measures which they propose for preserving the people from a tyranny. In the middle ages it is to be remembered men worked on the foundations nature lays, and believed in the force of truth, and trusted in a manner the political interests of their country to its influence. The beautiful confiding principles of nature were not obliterated,—such as dictated that famous acquittal of the two youths accused of murdering their own father—they were acquitted because they were found sleeping. All suspicion of their guilt was removed at once, for no one thought, says Cicero, that he who had offended against all divine and human laws could sleep §. It was this confidence which formed the check upon the power of kings. John of Salisbury proposes an instance, for he says, “if Alexander had warred against those just men, on the last shores of the ocean, who explained their mode of life to him, perhaps he would not have prevailed against the in-

\* Dante, Purg. VI.

† Polit. V. 2.

‡ Restaurat. de la Science Pol. tom. III. 231.

§ Pro S. Roscio Amer.

nocent ; on that very account, because innocence is not easily conquered, and truth confiding in its strength triumphs ever armed chivalry\*.” They believed in the force of meekness and humility, of which the very ideal really existing in her whom all generations call blessed, is said by the Church to have the might of armies. “*Terribilis es ut castrorum acies ordinata.*” “Behold,” says John of Salisbury, “the end not alone of those kings, who by abuse exercise tyranny ; but of those many tyrants in private life, of whom there may be some, even in the priesthood ; for the republic of the impious has its head and its members, and, even as it were, its civil institutions, endeavouring to imitate the legitimate republic ; a tyrant being its head, heretical and schismatical priests its soul, unjust laws its ears and eyes, violent armed men its hands. It is useless to dwell on the end of tyrant kings, which is known ; but where are the private tyrants, the domestic tyrants, Gaufridus, Milo, Manulphus, Alanus, Simon, Gilbertus, not so much counts of the kingdom as public enemies ? Where is William of Salisbury ? Where Marimus, who by interposition of the blessed Virgin, fell into the ditch that he had made for others ? Of these, as the malice was criminal, so the infamy and horror of their end are known to the present age. You have not, therefore, to read histories ; you have only to open your eyes to look on what is around you, to see that the end of tyrants is miserable†.” Nor should we overlook the force of those fearful denunciations of the punishments of a future life, with which the ministers of religion continually threatened tyrants ; of those tremendous visions which they recounted, in which men heard, as from an unearthly voice, words like those of Dante’s guide,

\* Lib. IV. cap. xi.

† Lib. VIII. cap. xvii. xxi.



These are the souls of tyrants, who were given  
To blood and rapine. Here they wail aloud  
Their merciless wrongs \* :

After shewing the heathen examples of tyrannicide, and those of the Old Testament, John of Salisbury concludes in the spirit of meekness, that it is out of limit and true rule to stand against anointed majesty, saying that a wicked king ought to be endured with patience, in the hopes of his repenting like David; and he adds, "if the people are innocent and humble, then God will certainly stand by them †" "Neither is it lawful," he says, "through the favour of new persons to depart from the blood of princes, in constituting empire, to whom, by a privilege of the Divine will, a succession of children is promised, if they walk in the judgments of the Lord; and yet if they decline a little from the way, they are not immediately to be cast off, but to be corrected paternally in justice, until it becomes clear that they are obstinate in evil. The vices of kings are to be borne with, lest a greater evil should result from their destruction, for it is the will of God that we should bear the burden ‡." Yet a sterner principle was admitted by sovereigns themselves. Charles the Bald, in 856, declared by a formal act, that the grandees of his kingdom could resist the king by force of arms, if he required any thing unjust. Henry I. king of England, recognized the same right in his subjects, in the strongest terms. The mighty king Andrew II. confirmed it to the states of Hungary, in 1222. John, king of Denmark, recognized the same right in the subjects of his three kingdoms. Alphonso III. king of Aragon, conferred it on the barons of his kingdom, in 1287; and in Poland the natural right of a legitimate resist-

\* Hell XII.

† Lib. VIII. cap. xvii.

‡ In lib. V. cap. vi.

ance, was also formally announced. This is to be ascribed to those sentiments of individual liberty, that energetic development of the rights of individuals, which the feudal system was so calculated to maintain and cherish: still this made resistance legal. A more consistent and efficacious defence consisted in provision for legislative redress, and also in the counsellors, who, under various denominations, were appointed to assist in the government of the people. In this respect, the monarchies of Christendom partook of the Homeric and Dorian character. The Homeric assembly, the *βουλή γερόντων* consisted of the older men of the chief families. At Sparta the *γερονσία* was the council to which none but men of sixty or more years of age had admission, for “the Dorians,” says Müller, “laid the greatest importance upon age in the management of public affairs. These old counsellors were subject to no responsibility, since it was thought that the near prospect of death would give them more moderation than any fear of incurring censure. Plato calls this *τὴν κατὰ γῆρας σώφρονα δύναμιν*\*. Dionysius after expressing his preference of the kingly mode of government chosen by the companions of Romulus, as being the best of all kinds of rule, observes that all the ancient kings of the world had their councils composed of men of the noblest families, and were not like those of later ages, independent and abandoned to their own opinions†. The Christian sovereign was again the heroic, or Homeric, or Dorian king; not a despot, but having a council to assist him to rule: and of this government St. Thomas Aquinas says, that as the rule of a tyrant is the worst, so that of a king is the best of all forms‡. French writers observe, that the appearance of such a prince

\* Ag. III.

† Antiquit. Roman. lib. II. c. xii.

• De Regimine Princip. III.

in the middle ages as Louis XI., is an extraordinary and almost inexplicable phenomenon, and that he stands alone in the old annals of their nation, like one who does not belong to the series of their kings. The history of the counsellors of kings in ages of faith, is rich in sublime examples of public virtue. Lord Bacon says of the philosophers who followed the rich, and fell at the feet of tyrants, and who were too prudent to contradict kings, "These and the like applications and stoopings to points of necessity and convenience, cannot be disallowed: for though they may have some outward baseness; yet in a judgment truly made, they are to be accounted submissions to the occasion and not to the person \*." Catholic counsellors, from being ignorant of this nice distinction, made by the great reformer of philosophy, were unanimous in disallowing such applications and stoopings which would have destined them, as they supposed, to join hereafter those ghosts which Dante saw in the second chasm, all immersed in ordure

Who gibber in low melancholy sounds  
With wide-stretch'd nostrils snort, and on themselves  
Smite with their palms †.——

Far different from what these were when on earth, they would not have been afraid to name a Cyclops before Philip; nor would they have acted the part of Cleon before the tyrant people of Athens. Christine de Pisan says, "that the task of correcting men of high authority in a state, belongs naturally to their private and intimate friends, who for the good of their soul, and for the sake of their renown, ought to admonish them secretly of their faults ‡." What a contrast is here to the pagan spirit of the English Protestant chancellor! Mercurieu, counsellor of the

\* On the Advancement of Learning.

† Hell, XVIII.

‡ Livre des Faits du bon Roi Charles V. liv. II. chap. xviii.

emperor Charles V. refused to sign a treaty of peace which he judged unjust and inhuman, and nevertheless retained his place \*. The chancellor of Philip II. duke of Burgundy, alone withstood the prince on one occasion, and declared that he would rather renounce his dignity, than consent to such measures; and the duke was so pleased with his courage, that he loaded him with greater honour than before †. Even Don Pedro the Cruel found a counsellor in Fernandez of Toledo, who was bold enough to represent sincerely to him, the crimes of his government; though he had the baseness to repay him, by sending him to the scaffold. Far different was the conduct of the Black Prince, when the Sire d'Aleuret, in presence of the court at Bordeaux, declared to him the reports which circulated to his discredit. The prince replied, "Little would that knight love me, if he saw in me, or heard me say any thing contrary to my honour, and would not tell me of it. Therefore let me hear what people say against me." This led to a disclosure, which ended in the deliverance of his prisoner Du Guesclin ‡. The tenderness with which these bold speakers were cherished by Christian kings, is often presented in an affecting light. When Ansel de Garlande, Senechal of France, was slain by the baron de Puiset, king Louis-le-gros testified a most extraordinary grief, and for a long time after could never speak of any thing without alluding to the fate of his dear senechal; insomuch that he would not even grant any favour excepting upon condition that one would pray to God for the soul of Ansel. In an ancient charter of the Abbey of Maurigni, near Estampes, this condition is expressed in a touching manner: he grants this favour to the monks in memory of his faithful

\* Guicciardini, Hist. lib. XVI.

† Drexelius Phaëtont. cap. IX.

‡ Chronique de Du Guesclin Bibliothèque Choisie, III.

senechal, who had loved them in his life, and on condition that they cease not to pray to God for his soul. John of Salisbury, the priest of holy Church, explaining the duty of those who are to counsel kings, speaks very differently from Lord Bacon, the Protestant philosopher. "The rich and powerful kings of the earth," he says, "ought not to be flattered when they do evil : for free speech is not treason, and the Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth ; and he will cry though he will not be heard, when any one hardens his ear to the cry of the poor." The same language had been addressed to the emperor Theodosius, by St. Ambrose, "It is neither imperial to deny liberty of speech, nor sacerdotal, not to say what one thinks ; for there is nothing so popular and amiable in you emperors as to love liberty in those who are subject to you. And if this be the distinction between good and evil princes, that the good love liberty, and the evil slavery, nothing in the priesthood is so perilous before God, and so disgraceful with men, as not to deliver one's thoughts freely\*." Mariana relates that the king Don John II. of Portugal, being applied to for a certain vacant office, replied to those who asked for it, that he had long intended to present it to a favourite of his, one who had such a zeal for his service, that he had never spoken to him with the mere desire of being agreeable, but only with the wish to serve him and the state. When Petrarch and the emperor were bidding each other farewell, a Tuscan knight in the emperor's train, said to him, "This is the man of whom I have so often spoken to you : he will sing your praise if you deserve it ; but be assured he knows when to speak and when to be silent : " such freedom of speech did the emperor grant to those who were attached to his person ; resembling, in this respect, our Henry V. in Shaks-

\* S. Ambrosii Epist. xxix.

peare, who replies to the ambassadors of France, on their asking if they might venture to render freely what they had in charge :

We are are no tyrant, but a Christian king,  
Unto whose grace our passion is as subject  
As are our wretches fetter'd in our prisons :  
Therefore with frank and with uncurbed plainness  
Tell us the dauphin's mind.

The non-intervention of the commons in the affairs of the ancient governments, is a theme of bitter and interminable declamation with writers of our time : the fact certainly is, that whatever was begun by the commons was anciently termed petition ; for they had no jurisdiction or power to ordain ; but yet it should be remembered that the great charter which protected every individual of the nation in the free enjoyment of his life, his liberty, and his property, unless declared to be forfeited by the judgment of his peers, or the law of the land, was secured at a time when the House of Commons was not in being \*. It does not follow that the interests of the people in other countries were neglected, because there was not a nest of sophists, fed at their expense, forming a central power in the capital, under some vile politician, like Bolinbroke in Richard's time, "that king of smiles;" while poets were addressing odes to commemorate the glory of their insurrections, like Falstaff lauding and praising them, because they offended none but the virtuous, and orators were explaining the abstract happiness and freedom of the general nation, in which domestic liberty had perished. Possibly it happened, as Strabo says of the Rhodians, that "though not under a democratic government, great care was taken of the people †." When the Ca-

\* Note to Sir M. Hale's Hist. of the Common Law, 181.

† Lib. XIV.



tholic religion prevailed in England, the liberty of the subject was secured, without the system of political fictions; and in France, when the government rejected the Catholic religion, nothing was done for the liberty of the subject, which that system established; for it left the minds and the persons of the lower classes without freedom, by means of the monopoly of education, and the conscript laws. Even with respect to the ancient military service, it was the intention of the monarchs that no one should be obliged to pay exorbitantly for a substitute; it was the sentence of Charlemagne, "*ut liberi homines pauperes a nullo injuste opprimantur* \*." The great writers of the middle ages express sentiments with regard to the people that breathe the most ardent and judicious love of freedom: hear what Vincent of Beauvais says, "There must be mutual safety for king and people; he errs who thinks that the king is safe when nothing is safe from the king: clemency, and not a fortress of towers, is the best security for him †." "In the depression of the people," says John of Salisbury, "the strength of the prince is weakened; for a people ground down is neither able nor willing to increase his power ‡." "As for the people in a state," he says elsewhere, "their duties are so various, that no writer of offices has treated of each separately; but generally all things are to be referred to the public good, and whatever is useful to the humbler classes, that is, to the multitude, should be pursued in all things, for a minority should always yield to the greater number. To this end magistrates are appointed that they may ward off injuries from the subjects, and nothing can be more disgraceful to the magistrates of a state than when this class is trodden down; but the whole republic will be safe

\* Baluz. tom. I. col. 515.

† Speculum doctrinale, lib. V. c. ii.

‡ De Nugis Curialium, lib. V. cap. vi.

as long as the superior members attend to the inferior; and the inferior to the superior, that each may assist the other, and think that to be always useful to itself, which it knows will prove most useful to the other\*. Civil life should imitate nature, and may be formed best after the model of that of bees, described by Virgil, to whose republic the philosopher sends us to learn civil policy†. If kings offend God or trample upon the Church, the safety of the whole state is endangered; a result so alien from the office of a prince, that whenever that happens in a republic, he is thought either not to perceive it, or to sleep, or to be absent‡. But yet Christ will hear the poor when they cry, and then it will be in vain to multiply vows, and to endeavour as if to bribe God with gifts; for the offerings of the impious are an abomination to the Lord, because they are made from wickedness: and he who offers sacrifice from the robbery of the poor, is as he who should immolate a son to his father. Nevertheless, I am still bound as a debtor, not only to the good, but also to the evil, in humility and respect to God, by whom all power is instituted. And therefore the Hebrews were commanded to pray for Babylon, because in the peace of princes is the rest of the people§: but the whole virtue and prosperity of the state depends upon the maintenance of charity in all the parts of the body politic, and upon the flesh being subdued to the spirit; for where this continues, neither will the members be oppressed by the swelling of the head, nor the head weakened by the destitution and indolence of the members; for all this proceeds from the infirmity of sin: for the faults of inferiors derogate from the merit of princes, and the sins of princes are an occasion of sinning to subjects. A prince there-

\* Id. lib. VI. cap. xx.

† Lib. VI. c. xxv.

‡ Cap. xxi.

§ Id. lib. VI. cap. xxvi.

fore is made mild by the innocence of the people, and popular movements are repressed by the innocence of rulers\*." Many of the moderns are not prepared to find that such sentiments as these prevailed in the middle ages, and yet there might be no end of producing parallel passages. That indifference for the interests of the people, to which we are now continually referred, is not to be found in the institutions and language of the ages of faith. At the siege of Calais, when the inhabitants were reduced to the last extremity, and were told to surrender at discretion, in hopes of some of them being ransomed, the governor said in his reply, "*nous avons enduré maint mal et mésaise ; mais nous sommes résolus a souffrir ce qu' oncques gendarmes, ne souffrirent plutôt que de consentir que le plus petit garçon de la ville eût autre mal que le plus grand de nous.*" All the formula and public acts of government were strongly expressive of the spirit which breathed in this noble reply. Thus at their coronation, the Norman princes swore "to defend the people committed to their care, and to govern always with goodness, justice, and loyalty." Religion defended even the material interest of the people. The bull in *Coena Domini*, which used to be read at Rome every Maundy Thursday, excommunicated all kings and rulers who should levy exorbitant taxes upon their subjects, or without consulting the Holy See. But the goodness of sovereigns was often of itself sufficient protection. The princes of Lorraine, when they wanted taxes had only to rise up in the church after mass, and wave their hat in the air, and the faithful people used to supply them immediately with what they wanted. Such was the wise economy of Suger, as regent of France, that while he was able to meet the king's repeated demands for money

\* Id. lib. VI. cap. 29.

to assist him in the East, the people found not once occasion of complaint for any tax\*. Nor were they retained in a state of humiliation. "A prince," says Don Savedra, "should honour not only the nobility, and their ministers, but also all other subjects, who render themselves worthy by any particular merit, as is recommended by king Don Alonso, in one of his laws, where he shews how a king ought to honour virtue wherever it is found; and he adduces reasons for all kinds of persons, beginning from the highest, and descending to the very lowest in the scale of society†." I have already spoken of the ceremony of the coronation of kings. This was often composed so as to indicate in a striking manner, the importance and necessity of attending to the interests of the people. When a new duke of Carinthia succeeded to the government, he was escorted by a multitude of peasants to a field, over the ruins of an ancient town, of which all that remains is one great block of marble. The new duke was to wear a peasant's hat and shoes, and hold a shepherd's crook, so as to resemble a shepherd. Having come to the spot with banners borne before him, one peasant mounted on the great stone, was to cry out, "Who is he that comes with all these banners?" They answer, "It is the prince of the country:" he cries, "Is he a just judge, does he seek the good of the land? and is he of a free condition, worthy of honour, an observer and defender of the Christian religion?" They cry, "He is and will be." Then the peasant comes down, gives the prince possession of the spot, gives him a slight blow on the cheek, and the prince mounts on the stone, brandishes a naked sword, and speaks to the people; then he drinks water out of his hat, to denote simplicity of life. Then he is escorted to the church, where he

\* Hist. de Suger, VI.

† Christian Prince, II. 104.

assists at mass, and assumes the ducal state. This investiture by the peasants, is said to be retained as a privilege arising from their priority in faith; because it was the peasants who first received the religion of Jesus Christ, the princes and nobles not having been converted till the time of Charlemagne.

As religion, in these ages, supplied the principle of obedience to established rulers, so was it also esteemed the basis and origin of their power. King Don Fernando the Great, said to God with his last breath, "To thee, O Lord, belongs all power; command is thine. Thou art Lord above all kings, and all are subject to thy Divine Providence. Into thy hands, then, I commend the sceptre which thou hadst the goodness to entrust in mine." Savedra observes, that king Don Fernando the Saint used nearly the same words, in his last hours. These men understood their office. The council of Paris in the year 824, reminded kings that they must not suppose that they hold their kingdoms from their ancestors, but from God. The modern sophists always speak of the religious basis of government and legislation, as the characteristic of a barbarous age. Yet the most illustrious sages of the ancient world recognised no other. According to the principles of the Dorian sovereignty, to which I have already alluded, as the object of the predilection of Plato, the dignity of the king was founded on a religious notion, and his power limited by religion. Müller shews how intimate in early times was the connection between government and religion. "It is clear," he says, "that the Dorians considered the kingly office as proceeding from the Deity, and not as originating from the people; which would, I believe, have seemed to them in no wise more natural than that the liberty of the people should be dependent on the king\*."

\* Hist. of the Dorians, book III. 6.

Bonald well observes, in speaking of the Christian monarchies, that "Religion which placed God at the head of society, gave man a high idea of the human dignity, whereas philosophy, which is always searching for men who are above other men, to give them laws, creeps always at the feet of some idol: in Africa at the feet of Mahomet, in Europe at the feet of Voltaire or Luther; and rejecting God from the universe, makes gods of men, whose talents and opinions it admires. As legitimate power came from God, authority was justified and obedience ennobled; so that men equally feared commanding, and felt honour in obeying \*." "The new sophists," he says, "having discarded the divine mission, had recourse to a human mission, and sought in an aggregation of men, the reason of the power, which they found not in one individual; but the people itself was only a collection of men, and so it was still men who sent men to give laws to men: and Jurieu, the apostle of the popular sovereignty, thought to escape from the difficulty, by saying boldly that the people is the only authority, which has no need of reason to validate its acts; a sentence which extorted from Bossuet a burst of fearful and indignant eloquence. All the ancient legislators founded their laws in the doctrine of the divinity." Virgil used the general expression in making Ilioneus ascribe to Jupiter the foundation of a new city, and the power of ruling the proud nations with justice †. "It required," says Bonald, "thousands of years, and a great progress in human philosophy, to be able to deny the Supreme Being a place in the constitutional code of a people, and to regard as a conquest the having been able to secularise its legislation." Nothing could be more simple than the views of the Christian nations in this respect. The civil legislation rested entirely

\* Du Divorce.

† *Æneid*, lib. I. 532.



upon the foundation of the natural and divine law, and the decalogue was in the first page of all the civil and criminal codes. The emperor Justinian had defined jurisprudence to be "the knowledge of things divine and human;" and his code began in the name of the Holy Trinity and of the Christian faith and by the most solemn and express declaration of the sovereignty of religion, and of the primacy of the Roman Church. These expressions did not arise from a mere vague sentiment of an abstract truth. The immediate support which government derived from the meekness and piety of the people was well understood. Suger had often on his tongue the words of St. Ambrose, "the sins of the people are the true cause of the revolutions of empires; and it is in vain that princes flatter themselves, that subjects will be faithful to them, if they are not faithful to God\*." The golden bull, which was the fundamental law of the German empire, begins by an apostrophe to "Satan, to pride, to luxury, wrath, and envy." And, in fact, in the ancient Catholic state, as of old in the Dorian, education was upon the whole a subject of greater importance than government. Again, the object of legislation was not different in its last terms, from that of religion. The universal reason, and the primal traditions of mankind had taught this lesson to the heathen legislators, that neither a state nor a man can be happy where luxurious and licentious manners prevail; but that of necessity such states would be a prey to a succession of revolutions, establishing either a tyranny, or an oligarchy, or a democracy; so that there would be no peace†. Dionysius, in treating on the early history of Rome, continually remarks that the great object of all wise government should be the cherishing temperance, simplicity, and justice

\* De Fide, XII.      † Plato, Epist. vii.

among the people, and that no peace or safety can be hoped for in a state where these virtues do not exist\*. “This is what I chiefly admire in the man,” he says of Romulus, “that he sought to cherish and secure, and not leave to chance, the things which form the happiness of a state:—first, the favour of the gods, which causes all the affairs of men to prosper; then temperance and justice, by means of which men are less inclined to injure each other, are more peaceable, and are disposed to estimate happiness, not by shameful pleasures, but by virtue and honour.” Plato teaches that the great object of all national legislation, should be the promotion of virtue†; he says not a word about commerce, glory, or the preserving a rank in the scale of nations. Leibnitz, with noble energy, protests against the modern teachers of jurisprudence, who dare to teach with Pufendorff, that “the end of the science of national law, is confined to the limits of this life;” this, he says is the policy of atheism: the pagan philosophy is in this point more wise, more severe, more sublime than that of Pufendorff. “I am astonished,” he continues, “that Christians should permit such a degradation of philosophy, which has been so noble and so holy in the hands of some pagans.” Man never existed, and never will exist, in a state of pure nature, that is, unassisted by sanctifying grace, and not directed to a supernatural end. “The more a people is constituted, the more it makes its political laws religious laws; and its religious laws political laws; not in civilizing religion, but in consecrating civil policy. Those who wish constantly to separate the one from the other, have never comprehended man or society.” This is what Bonald says‡. In ages of faith no

\* Antiquit. Roman. lib. II. cap. xviii.

† De Legibus, III.

‡ Législat. Primit. tom. II. 32.

human legislation was permitted to interfere with any part of the Divine commands. "A law," says Tertullian, "which was before Cæsar, and which is above Cæsar." Cicero, in a magnificent passage, preserved by Lactantius, speaking of the great divine and primitive law given to mankind, declares that it can never be disannulled, "*nec vero aut per senatum aut per populum solvi hac lege possumus.*" Indeed Catholics were never inclined to ascribe to the political constitution of states, the same degree of importance which it holds with the vain multitude, who place their hope on an assembly of their choice, because they looked higher for the source of real good to their country, and to the human race. God, as a punishment for the sins of Israel, threatened them with a multitude of laws\*: and it is only with laws that men propose to save. The very object of all law is now reversed. "Laws are only made," says St. Isidore, "in order to restrain human audacity by fear, that innocence may be safe amidst the wicked; and that the wicked by fear of punishment may lose the courage and ability to injure †." What a change has taken place in the legislation of nations since these ages of faith. In France and the Isle that once was wise, and Belgium, abandoned to a king who understood but gold, laws are multiplied, not against human audacity, but against the humble ministers of religion; against ecclesiastical colleges, against orders of holy men serving God; though even Tacitus declares, "*non ex rumore statuendum ‡,*" against the foundation of spiritual institutions, and, in short, they are made as if for the express purpose of leaving innocence at the mercy of men, who cry "heaven we fear thee not."

\* Osee, viii. 11.

† Isidor. 2. Etymol. l. Leg. c. de Leg.

‡ Ann. III.

Tacitus says, that a good politician is like God\* : but to what is a modern politician to be compared ? We may observe here, that Socrates professed and practised a veneration for the laws of his country †, which was excessive and unknown to the philosophy of Christians ; for they can recognize no covenant with society, which obliges them to await their own destruction from its unjust decrees. The text leaves no room for what Cicero calls the noble fierceness of Socrates before his judges ‡ : for it expressly charges them to fly from the insane city, which should choose to persecute them. Under a despotism, the will of a tyrant ; in a democracy, that of the people is sufficient to make a thing legal, but it does not follow that it is therefore to be allowed. Modern governments drawing from this double source of despotism, pronounce many things to be according to their legal order, which the “non possumus,” of those who adhere to the wisdom of faithful ages will never suffer to pass into execution. “O Church of Jesus Christ,” exclaims Bossuet, “from thy birth thou didst already confound all the magistrates and powers of Jerusalem by the single firmness of this word—non possumus. We cannot keep silence as to the things which our eyes have seen—non possumus. But holy disciples of Jesus Christ, what is this new impotence ? Within these few days past, you were trembling, and the boldest of the troop cowardly denied his Master, and now you say—non possumus ! and why can you not ? Because things have been changed ; a celestial fire has fallen upon us ; a law has been written in our hearts ; an all-powerful spirit impels us ; charmed by its infinite attractions, we have imposed upon ourselves a blessed necessity of loving Jesus Christ more than our life. This is the reason why we can no longer obey the world ; we

\* Lib. III.

† Plato Crito.

‡ Cicero, Tuscul. I. 29.

can suffer, we can die, but we cannot keep silence, as to the things which we have seen and heard \*." The plea of legal order is, after all, very ancient: it was used by the Persian counsellors, to persuade the king of Babylon to cast Daniel to the lions. "Scito rex, quia lex est,—ut omne decretum quod constituerit rex, non liceat immutari." They would not suffer the king to shew mercy contrary to his own ordinance †. "The philosophy of a people," says Bonald, "is its legislation. When men, greedy of domination, impose their own opinions upon a people for laws, and endeavour to make their particular sentiments a general doctrine, absurd and impious legislations are the consequence."

Let us endeavour to form a clear view of the spirit and object of legislation in ages of faith. "We call those princes happy," said St. Augustin, "who employ their power in extending the worship of God, making it subservient to his majesty:" and again, "In this we see whether kings serve God; if in their capacity of kings, they ordain what is good, and prohibit evil; not only in what pertains to human society, but also with respect to religion †." "We do not," says St. Thomas, "call those princes happy in proportion as they reigned long, left the government to their sons, punished public enemies, or vanquished the citizens who rose in rebellion against them; but we call those happy, who ruled justly, who preferred governing their passions to ruling over nations, who did all things, not for the sake of vain glory, but through the love of everlasting happiness §." The type of the character of the Christian king may be collected from the office of his coronation, in which the Church prays that "this servant of God

\* Serm. pour le Jour de la Pentecôte.

Dan. vi.

† Cont. Crescon. gram. III. 51.

De Regimine Principum ad Regem Cypri.

may be protected by the gift of ecclesiastical peace, and may deserve to attain to the joys of eternal peace by Jesus Christ; and the king having prostrated himself with the bishops and priests upon the cross, whilst the other clergy sing the Litane, the metropolitan interrogates him as follows: ‘Do you wish to hold the holy faith which is delivered to you by Catholic men, and to observe it with just works?—I wish it. Do you wish to be a defender and guardian of the holy churches, and of the ministers of the churches?—I wish it. Do you wish to rule and to defend the kingdom conceded to you by God according to the justice of your fathers?—As far as I shall be able, by the divine assistance and the comfort of all the faithful, I promise so to act faithfully in all things.’ Then the metropolitan places the crown reverently upon the king’s head, saying, ‘take the crown of the kingdom which is placed upon your head by the hands of bishops, although unworthy, in order to impress you with the sense that this expressly denotes the glory and honour of sanctity, and therefore you should not be ignorant that by this you become a partaker of our ministry, that as we are understood to be pastors and rulers of souls in the interior, so you also may in external things be a true worshipper of God, and a strenuous defender of the Church of Christ against all adversities.’” How well this type was followed in the minds and deeds of kings, history shews in numerous instances. Pope St. Leo writing to the emperor Theodosius says, “that he rejoices to find that the emperor evinces not only a royal, but also a sacerdotal mind, and that besides his imperial and public cares, he has a pious solicitude for the Christian religion.” Savedra says, “that the kings of Spain esteemed more the honour and glory of God than their own aggrandisement, like Flavius Jovian, who when proclaimed emperor by the army, refused the dignity, saying that



he was a Christian, and that he ought not to command men who were not Christians, and he did not consent until the soldiers cried out that they too would be Christians." In the third council of Toledo, when King Recharedus had succeeded in bringing back the Arian Goths to the unity of the Church, it is recorded that he thus spoke: "If we are to labour with all our force to repress the evil of wicked men, and to promote peace on earth, much more are we bound to desire and imitate celestial things, to sigh for what is sublime, and to shew truth to the people who are recovered from error\*." The power and grandeur of kingly government were thus to be devoted to extend the honour of the King of kings; but consistently with all the principles of human action then recognised, how could a different object of government have been admitted? Villani says, in the preface to his history, in the spirit of these ages, that he begins the book which is to celebrate the city of Florence, "to the glory of God, and of the blessed St. John." When every work of man was thus dedicated, as it were, to the Divine glory, would it not have been strange, indeed, if the noblest of all sciences had been otherwise directed? Men felt that it would? Philip Augustus, in departing for the crusade, published his testament, which was to determine the manner of conducting the government during his absence; and in this he required that his mother, the Queen Adèle, and his uncle William, Archbishop of Rheims, should redress the wrongs of his subjects four times in the year, and do justice "for the honour of God." The founders of the ancient governments in ages of faith understood the end of man and of society to consist in leading souls to God†. Hence politics were made to wait upon

\* Ribadeneira, *Princeps Christ.* I. cap. xii.

† Menochii *Hierœconomica, seu Œconomica ex Sacris Literis depromptæ*, 1628.

religion, instead of sacrificing religion to every political or commercial interest, to an election or the value of a manufactory. Θεωρητέον δὴ καὶ τῷ πολιτικῷ περὶ ψυχῆς· said Aristotle\*. Political science in the middle ages rested upon a certain faith concerning the soul. This faith was embodied as it were in all the measures of government: the very coins expressed it: on the money of some of the Popes was inscribed, “væ vobis divitibus!” The administration of a Catholic state corresponded with the desire of the ancient sage, when he said, “Let the legislator take care to convince the people that the soul is a thing wholly different from the body, that it is in the soul that each man’s identity consists, that it is immortal, and that after its departure from the body, it will be called to give an account of all that it has done, an account τῷ μὲν ἀγαθῷ θαρράλεον, τῷ δὲ κακῷ μάλα φοβερόν†. This sentence from the tongue of Plato, expressing the universal reason of men, formed by original revelation and the constant traditions of the human race, conveys a summary of the principles which directed government in ages of faith. It was then thought that the true policy of states could not be better known than by the light of the Christian religion, and of its sacred books. So teach St. Thomas‡; Gilles de Rome §; Savedra ||; Kircher¶; Bossuet \*\*; Ribadeneira ††; Spedalieri ‡‡; Scotti §§; and all Catholic writers on legislation. Between the modern writers on the sciences which relate to society and the Catholic authors, the same distinction exists which Cicero remarked between the writings of the stoics

\* Ethic. Nic. lib. I. xiii.

† De Legibus, XII.

‡ De Regim. Princip.

§ Miroir.

|| Christian Prince.

¶ Principis Christiani Archetypon Politicum.

\*\* Politique de l’Ecrit.

†† Princeps Christianus.

‡‡ De Diritti dell’ Uomo. §§ Teoremi di Politica Cristiana.

and the peripatetics ; the former of whom, he observed, said so many things that he could never understand ; while the latter, treating on the same subjects, used no word that was not perfectly intelligible\*. The Catholic writers were so noble, so straightforward, generous, and simple, that even children could understand them at once ; there was no contrast between their principles and the ordinary precepts of religion ; whereas those of their opponents seem addressed to persons who know and care nothing about Christianity, and they are at total variance with its morality and design. Of their state policy we may say,—

*Νοσῶν ἐν αὐτῷ φαρμάκων δεῖται σοφῶν.*

The Archduke Leopold of Austria, son of the emperor Ferdinand II., hearing some one cite Machiavel to prove that an ambassador ought to be able to disguise things : “ How,” cried he, “ it is not allowed to tell the least falsehood to save the whole world, and how then can it be lawful to do so to obey a prince, or to ensure success to an embassy ?” Don Savedra expressly says, “ the safest books for a prince to consult, are those which the Divine wisdom has dictated. Here the prince will find a perfect policy for all possible accidents, and instruction to direct him in the government of himself and of his states.” “ The first thing that a master ought to teach a prince,” he continues, “ is to fear God, for that is the beginning of wisdom. He who is in God, is in the fountain of science. The science of men is, properly speaking, an ignorance ; it is the daughter of malice which destroys states and princes †.” Nicolas Vauquelin Sieur du Iveteaux, in his poem de L’Institution du Prince, addressed to his pupil the Prince de Vendôme, reminds the great, that it is from

\* De Finibus, lib. IV. ii.

† Christ. Prince, I. xlvi.

heaven that all their plans and motives of life ought to proceed\*: and Antoine Godeau, the learned bishop of Vence, published in 1644 an admirable work entitled, “*L’Institution du Prince Chrétien*,” in which the same lessons are conveyed to kings†. No sooner were the maxims of Machiavelli proposed than they excited the utmost horror. Ribadeneira wrote his “*Christian Prince*” to confute them by the doctrine of the Christian legislators. Lord Bacon even remarked, “that these men, bred in learning, like certain of the Popes, were perhaps to seek in points of convenience, and accommodating for the present, which the Italians call ‘*ragioni di stato*,’ and he observes that Pius V. could not hear them spoken of with patience, terming them inventions against religion and the moral virtues;” he adds, “that on the other side, they are perfect in those same plain grounds of religion, justice, honour, and moral virtue‡.” Governments were to act with scrupulous honour, “*Treaties with infidels and heretics*,” says Don Savedra, “must be strictly observed; for justice requires it, and as it is not permitted to a Catholic to kill or hate any one of a contrary religion, so neither is it lawful for him to deceive such a person, or fail in his word to him. Joshua kept his faith with the Gibeonites, and was rewarded by God§, and David was punished for a contrary offence||.” “*Honour*,” continues this devout Spaniard, “is one of the principal instruments of the art of reigning. If it were not the child of glory, I should have thought it an invention of policy: it is the strength of states, and I do not know one that can

\* Gouget, *Bibliothèque Franc.* tom. XVI. 113.

† Id. tom. XVII. 290.

‡ On the Advancement of Learning.

§ Josh. ix. 19.

|| 2 Sam. xxi. 1. *Christian Prince*, II. 469.

maintain itself long without it\*.” He would have found some in later times that thought they had discovered the art, with whom to deceive, as Pliny says, “pro moribus temporum, prudentia est.” De Haller has remarked that the new political principles alter even the commonest notions of honour. What private man would not feel himself dishonoured if his bonds were to be offered for a half or a third of their nominal value? But yet sovereigns are now to do this with indifference; for as they are debts of the state, no one believes himself interested in the honour of this imaginary being†. What private gentleman would not scorn the invitation to refuse the shelter of his roof to an unhappy guest, whose enemies were jealous of his presence? In the middle ages it would have been deemed an equal insult if addressed to the ruler of a state. In the eleventh century, when Pandolfe de Teano was obliged to capitulate and deliver up Capua to his rival Pandolf of Capua who was assisted by the Normans, he passed with his family to Naples, which little republic was then governed by Sergio. Encouraged by this success, Pandolfe of Capua desired that Sergio would banish a rival whose near presence gave him such alarm. The positive refusal which he received to betray the rights of hospitality occasioned a rupture between the princes. Sergio being the weakest, was forced to fly from Naples, which then, for the first time, received the standard of the Lombards. Pandolfe de Teano escaped to Rome and died there, and he who had so generously sacrificed his interests for the sake of humanity, suffered misfortunes for three years, till he procured the assistance of the Norman knights who warmly espoused his cause, and soon reinstated him in possession of

\* Christian Prince, II. 95.

† Restauration de la Science Pol. III. 46.

his domains. The history of these ages abounds with instances of the policy of honour. The king, Don Henrique IV. was advised by some to arrest Don John Pachecue, Marquis of Vileña, the great author of the troubles which afflicted the kingdom, but he refused, saying, that he had promised him a safe conduct to come to Madrid, and that he could not fail his word. "What troubles and perils did not the kingdom of Aragon endure," cries Savedra, "in consequence of the king Don Pedro IV. regarding more utility than honour in peace and war?" Such was not the Catholic policy, as England might have borne witness, Cromwell retained a large sum of money which had been sent from Spain for the government of the Netherlands, but which was thrown upon the coast of England by a storm.—Upon refusing to give it up, some persons advised the Archduke Leopold to retaliate: but he replied, "What shall we take from Cromwell or the Parliament who unjustly detain our property by following such a plan of vengeance? The goods of the English, which are in our ports, belong to private men, not to Cromwell or the Parliament: the innocent then would suffer for the guilty! I appeal to you, would this be justice\*." In short, the character which Guizot says distinguished St. Louis from all the other kings that ever reigned, excepting Marcus Aurelius, was in truth a character which more or less belonged to whole generations of men in the ages of faith,—the habit of always considering in every action whether it was good or evil in itself, of regarding the moral good or evil of a measure, without any regard to its utility or consequences, and when once its good or evil was determined, of adopting the one and rejecting the other with a straightforward resolution, which no interests or considera-

\* Les Vertus de Léopold d'Autriche, par. N. Avancin.



tion whatever could alter. Since then the science of government was thus simple and Christian, it was natural that kings should be desirous of having the assistance of holy men, and ecclesiastics who were most qualified to teach it. Martial d'Auvergne gives them this advice.

Par quoy, princes, autour de vos personnes  
Ayez des clerks de condicions bonnes,  
Ne vous chaille des astrologiens ;  
Mieulx si vaudroit deux bons théologiens  
Pour enseigner de la sainte Esriture  
Que de parler du temps à l'aventure \*.

Hence it was that in many councils, as in that of Toledo, not merely matters of religion were regulated, but also those relating to the government of the state. This desire of kings, though honourable to them, was nevertheless injurious in some instances to ecclesiastical discipline. Thus we hear of the Statute of Merton, in the reign of Henry III., which was so called from the parliament, or rather council, sitting at the Priory of Merton, in Surrey, which belonged to regular canons. King Don Fernando the Catholic, used often to employ monks in his council, and this suggests a remark to Savedra, characteristic rather of Christian experience, than just in its immediate object, "that it was only barbarous arrogance in Hannibal to despise the lessons of Phormio; for though speculation alone cannot give practice," yet continues Don Savedra, "however experienced, Hannibal might have learned from him to purge his mind from treachery, to lay aside his cruelty towards the vanquished, and his pride towards those who came to him for protection; he would have learned to make a better use of his victory at Cannæ, to fly the delights of Capua, and to be reconciled to Antiochus †."

\* Les Vigiles de la Mort du Roi Charles VII.

† Christ. Prince, I. 313.

Savedra seems to reason on the supposition of Phormio being a monk or a priest of his acquaintance. Solemnly constituted defenders of the Church, and of the poor, who reaped the benefit of its riches, disposed by every worthy motive to pay honour to the ministers of religion who dispensed those riches, kings in these ages were generally found faithful in protecting ecclesiastical property. When king Don Fernando the saint besieged Seville, and there was a great want of money to carry on the siege, some persons advised him to make use of the treasures of the churches in so great a necessity ; but he replied, that he promised himself more from the prayers of the priests than from their riches. God rewarded this confidence, for the very next day the city was in his power. Savedra remarks, however, that the Apostolic See was always very liberal to the kings of Spain in assisting them in their contests with the infidels. Gregory VII. granted to the king Don Sancho Ramira of Aragon, the tenth and revenues of all the churches that were lately built or recovered from the Moors. Pope Urban conferred the same grace upon king Don Pedro I. of Aragon, and upon his successors, excepting the churches of residence. Gregory granted to the king Don Alonso the Wise, the third of ecclesiastical revenues which were destined to buildings ; Urban V. a third of the benefices of Castille to the king Don Pedro ; and Pope Sixtus IV. consented that the clergy should give in one payment 100,000 ducats for the war of Grenada : but these supplies were received and expended with scrupulous delicacy. The same assistance was generally rendered to the state in other countries when occasions of difficulty occurred ; and in an earlier age, when Charles Martel had taken the tithes and benefices, “ Pepin and Carloman, with the council of the servants of God and of the Christian people, passed a decree, justifying the retaining of their

goods on condition of paying every year to the church or monastery, a solidus for each farm house, and that on the death of the possessor, it should return to the Church; but even in the meantime, care was to be taken that the churches and monasteries whose goods had been thus lent ‘in precario,’ did not fall into indigence; in that event the Church and the house of God were to be replaced in full possession of their goods\*.” It may be remarked here, that Mabillon has shewn the falsehood of the modern fables respecting the supposed condemnation of the soul of Charles Martel, disclosed by the vision of Eucherius. Mabillon proves that it was unknown to Pepin, and that the fable was a popular invention of a much later age†. The moderns, in recurring to ancient times, condemn the influence of the clergy in matters of government, without having sufficiently attended to the character of that influence. It was priests who were always for teaching kings that their safety and their real grandeur consisted in having no quarrel but what was common with them and their people. The language of Fenelon was the same in spirit as had been addressed by the clergy to the civil power, from age to age, since the rise of the Christian monarchies. The authentic memorials of the saints in every period of history, prove that they did not fashion, wrest, or bow, their reading, or nicely charge their understanding soul to flatter tyrants. What then was the language of Fenelon? “You say that God will protect France,” he writes to the Duc de Chevreuse, “But where is the promise? Will God be appeased in seeing you humbled without humility? Will God be content with a devotion which consists in gilding a chapel, saying a chaplet, hearing a mass with music, being easily scandalised, and

\* Capitula Carolom. in 743, book I. 148.

† Præfat. in III. Sæcul. Benedict. §. viii.

banishing some heretics? The question is not only about finishing the war externally, but about giving bread to a famishing people, re-establishing agriculture and commerce, reforming luxury which gangrenes all the manners of the nation, recalling the true form of the kingdom, and tempering despotism, the cause of all our woes. If I loved France less, the king less, the royal house less, I would not speak thus \*." This refers to a calamitous period of history, when the principles of the ages of faith were either forgotten or, as in France, formally set aside. Let us return to those ages, and enquire what were the fruits of this spirit of legislation. Here the moderns in general have much to learn. Speaking of the Norman knights who recovered Sicily from the Sarassins in the eleventh century, Gauttier d'Arc says, that when he proceeds to treat on the foundation of the kingdom of the two Sicilies by these Normans, on their institutions, laws, and progress in science and letters, it will appear that "the policy or wisdom of these conquerors were not inferior to their heroic valour †." In fact, what was it that formed the government of Christian states, but the Christian religion? and if Crotona, by being subject to the philosophy of Pythagoras, gave rise, as Müller observes, to one of the most remarkable phenomena in the political history of the Greeks, what must not have followed from the Catholic religion, the philosophy so eminently of order, of unison, of κόσμος, having obtained the management of public affairs, and held possession of it for so long a time? But you desire to be shewn its effects? For the present it is sufficient to reply, behold the protection of the churches, the protection of the religious orders, the protection of the countless institutions of mercy, which minis-

\* Epist. cxxxii.

† Hist. des Conquêtes des Normans en Italie, Preface.

tered to the necessities of the poor, the protection of the temporal part of that blessedness which is promised to the meek, the protection of the countless institutions which ministered to the sanctification of souls, and to the completion of the number of the elect. In ages of faith men would have enquired no farther. But let us hear how the legislation of this period is spoken of by writers not disposed to pass over any defects in the men or deeds of Christian antiquity. Chateaubriand says, "that in the language of the institutions or laws of Alphonso the Wise, there is a tone of candour and of virtue which renders this king of Castille a worthy contemporary of St. Louis\*." King Richard I. instituted a body of naval laws on his return from the Holy Land, which are yet extant. The Commentator on Sir Matthew Hale's History of the Common Law of England says, "These laws were made at the Isle of Oleron, off the coast of France, where his fleet rendezvoused in its passage to the Holy Land. They were designed for the keeping of order, and for the determination of controversies abroad; and they were framed with such wisdom, that they have been adopted by other nations as well as by England. They are very prudent, humane, and just†." Sir Matthew Hale, after styling Edward I. our English Justinian, concludes thus, "I think I may safely say, all the ages since his time have not done so much in reference to the orderly settling and establishing of the distributive justice of this kingdom as he did, within the short compass of the thirty-five years of his reign. The short and pithy pleadings and judgments, in the judicial records of this reign, do far better render the sense of the business than those long, intricate, perplexed, and formal pleadings, which since the time of Henry VIII. came into use, and on which later times have

\* Discours Historiques, Pref.

† P. 175.

still farther improved." And he says elsewhere, that "the times of Henry VI., as also of Edward IV., Edward V. and Henry VII., were times that abounded with learning, and men excellent for legislative wisdom†." If the maxim of law, "*cuilibet in sua arte credendum est*," be admitted, here is enough to put to shame many who have written upon the history of the middle ages.

If now from the manners we pass to the men concerned with the government of states in ages of faith, we shall find the same characteristics in the practice which belonged to the theory of rule. There were, indeed, many princes who but little accorded with the noble and lofty sentiments which presided at the foundation of the Christian republics, but no historian has ever spoken of them, excepting as forming exceptions to the spirit and principles of their time; whereas in the lives of heroic and saintly kings, the writers most acquainted with antiquity have recognised the materials for the best and most faithful history of the middle ages. What student in the least conversant with these annals would ever think of questioning the justice of the remark made by Chateaubriand, where he says, "that St. Louis as a legislator, a hero, and a saint, is the representative of the middle ages?" It seems self-evident, and yet what a noble testimony does it furnish to their virtue and to their grandeur! It is to the kings of the middle age that the most exact and philosophic writers are obliged to recur in order to find an example of a great and wise government. Fenelon says, that no prince can be found more amiable or proper to serve as a model in all ages, than Charlemagne—that even his imperfections amidst so many virtues, are not without their interest. "I do not believe," he says, "that any king can be found

\* Hist. of the Common Law.



more deserving of being studied in every thing, or of higher authority to give lessons to other rulers\*.” Certainly the number of truly Christian kings is an astonishing fact in the history of mankind. Lewis of Grenada observes, that out of the great number of the Jewish kings, there were only three who observed religion and justice; for besides David, Ezekiah, and Joshua, all abandoned the law of the Most High, and despised the fear of God. “In which fact,” he says, “we can recognise not only the common disease of human nature, but also and much more, the danger of power and principality†.” But who could enumerate the series of wise and saintly kings who have appeared upon the thrones of Christendom? It is in ages which have been denominated barbarous, that we behold men answering to the ideal perfection of Plutarch’s heroes, who were to unite the possession of political power with the study and the love of wisdom‡. The ancient history of empires furnished no grounds for supposing that such an union was possible. “Truly,” says Glaucus to Socrates, “no one has ever seen a man possessing a character thus symmetrically composed as to virtue in this perfect accordance with himself in word and deed, and at the same time having sovereign authority in a state of which the character accorded with his own§.” What would he have said if he had beheld the Catholic kings of Catholic states in ages of faith, wearing their crowns adorned with the bright stars of virtue, which will shine to all eternity? What would he have said of our sainted and heroic Ethelreds, Edmunds, Oswalds, Alfreds, Edwards, and Henrys? What of the valour, and piety, and prudence, and magnanimity of the ancient kings of

\* Epist. xii. au Duc de Beauvilliers.

† In Nativitate B. Mariæ Concio, I.

‡ De Educat. XX.

§ Plato, de Repub, VI.

Spain—the political wisdom of Don Fernando—the liberality of Don Alonso the pierced-handed—the justice of Don Alonso XI.—the devotion of Don Fernando the saint? Their very titles would have seemed to him as full of inspiration, and capable of exciting men to heroic virtue: and who, in fact, does not feel, as it were, some interior assistance in the mysterious contest of life, when he hears of Don Fernando the saint, of Don Fernando the Catholic, of Don Alphonso the chaste, of Don Sancho the brave, of Don Alonso the magnanimous, of Don Iaïme the conqueror, that is say, the deliverer of his country, for the victories of the kings of Spain were like the fifty battles of our Alfred, not to subdue nations, but to defend their native land? In Italy, too, how many learned and holy princes, who like Robert, king of Naples, and James of Carrara, deserved, as Petrarch said, to be styled the fathers rather than the lords of their people! Consider again that ancient monarchy of France, of which so many of the crowns passed with saints to heaven! Even Guizot condemns Sismondi and other modern historians for maintaining that the first Capetians, Robert, Henry, and Philip, were insignificant kings, as being the kings of priests rather than warriors; for he shews that though supported by the clergy and governed by their influence, they played a most important part in all the affairs, civil and military, of their times\*. We hear of nothing at present but of the vices and absurdities of a monarchical government; but it is not in the history of ages of faith that we shall learn to despise it. How happy was Spain under pious kings, Ferdinand the Great, Alphonso the Great, Alphonso the chaste, Ferdinand the saint, and others? How great was Ferrara through its princes, Hercules of Este, Hippolytus of Este, and others?

\* Cours d'Hist. Mod. tom. IV. 386.

Modern writers pass in silence over the heroic virtues of the ancient kings of Christendom. They are exact and judicious in describing the castle of Plessis, but where is their penetration to leave us in ignorance of the walls which received to the earnest of eternal peace, the innocent and yet penitent Wamba? We have now popular histories, in convenient form, of all our ancient kings, but when we enter the Abbey of Westminster, and behold their sepulchres, do we believe that these statements, which we hold in our hands, exhibit their true image? The names of many of these kings, like Don Alonso VI. as described by Mariana, so modest and humble in prosperity, so constant and unmoved in adverse fortune, if they had belonged to men in a private station would have passed to immortality: all Spain was restored by the piety and valour of Don Pelayo, as was England by the virtue of Alfred.

And here a curious reflection suggests itself. In these latter ages, when men boast to have made such an advance in public virtue, and in the science of political society, when we behold kings, and noblemen who are really themselves kings, surrounded with every enjoyment that their rank and unlimited riches can bestow, and the only problem submitted to the lovers of order, seems to be how to reconcile the minds of subjects to their own condition, and how to make them admit that such an unequal distribution of the goods of this world is consistent with the plans of Infinite Justice, what would be thought of a writer, who, for the purpose of vindicating the ways of Providence, should engage in a long enquiry, in order to discover how and when God had provided a reward for kings and men in authority, and who should conclude that there must be a more eminent recompence reserved for them in heaven? Would not our astonishment be increased, if this were a writer of profound genius and a deeply reflecting mind, distinguished by his love of genuine freedom, and

by the boldness with which he was always ready to declare truth to princes? Such a writer, then, was found in the ages of faith, who, by this extraordinary meditation, has left a most glorious testimony, both to the doctrine then held, respecting power, and to the virtue of a great number of men, who then exercised it. From reflecting on the burden and perils of their service, that profound and acute philosopher, the angel of the school, sets himself to investigate what compensation the providence of God ordained for kings. He takes for granted their self-devotion, and says, “since it is the office of a king to seek the good of the multitude, this would seem too laborious a task, unless there were some good to result also to himself personally. He then inquires what is that personal good, and after proving that it is not honour and glory, as some have thought, and still less riches, all which motives, besides being unworthy, would lead him to commit great evil; he concludes, that it consists in an eminent reward in heaven; *est autem conveniens ut rex premium expectet a Deo* \*. Accordingly, Garcias Loaysa, in his councils of Spain, gives the discourse of bishops to a king, which takes this conclusion for granted: for they exclaim in the commencement, “*O quam beata est vita regum justorum! quæ et his temporalibus rebus fulta nitescit, et in æternum cum angelis immortaliter requiescit!*” Thus words that might, in other ages, be taken for an intolerable baseness, or for a satire, were received in ages of faith as a holy, a sincere, and just tribute to the merit of Catholic kings! Their reliques were often venerated as those of martyrs. Witness the hands of Oswald, king of the Northumbrians, which remained uncorrupted at Bamborough, in the time when the Saxon chronicle was written; a king, as it declares, whose holiness and miracles were displayed

\* *De Regimine Princip. cap. vii.*

on manifold occasions throughout the island. Witness again what is said of king Edward, who was slain at Corfe-gate, "deed more dreary than this was never done by the English, since they first sought the land of Britain. Men murdered him, but God has magnified him : he was, in life, an earthly king ; he is now, after death, a heavenly saint : him would not his earthly relatives avenge ; but his heavenly Father has avenged him amply. The earthly homicides would wipe out his memory from the earth, but the Avenger above has spread his memory abroad in heaven and in earth. Those who would not before bow to his living body, now bow on their knees to his dead bones. Now we may conclude that the wisdom of men and their meditations are as nought against the appointment of God \*." And in truth, how different then were the ideal and exercise of power ! See how far these rulers were removed from governing by the principles of the modern political science. The holy emperor Ferdinand II. says, amidst his perilous fortune, that he is resolved to lose the empire, and to go out begging alms with his family, rather than commit one unjust action to maintain his greatness : and Reginard, in his life of St. Annon of Cologne, testifies that the emperor Henry II. would never assume the royal ornaments, "*insignia regia*," until he had purified and healed his soul by sacramental confession and penance. The king Don Fernando, surnamed the great, increased his kingdom by the force of his virtues ; his piety was so great, that on the translation of the body of St. Isidore, he and his children bore the coffin, and with bare feet carried it from the Douro to the church of St. John, in the city of Leon. The noble qualities of the king Don Alonso V. of Aragon were so displayed during his imprisonment, that the duke of Milan, charmed with

\* The Saxon Chronicle, 164.

his merit, desired to possess him for a friend, and gave him his liberty, sending him away loaded with presents. This king Alonso, by being defeated and taken prisoner in the battle against the Genoese, obtained more than if he had conquered, for the duke supplied him with fresh forces to obtain the kingdom of Naples \*. Witness their generosity. Don Diego of Arias, treasurer to king Don Enrique IV., represented one day to his majesty the necessity of being less bountiful, and of dismissing some useless pensioners ; but the king refused to listen to his remonstrance. “ We give to these,” he replied, “ because they are men of goodness : we give to the others, in order that they may not become wicked. As for my officers, I retain some, because I have need of them, and others because they have need of me †.” Witness their diligence. Don Alonso the Wise, in one of his laws, prescribes rules to limit the recreation of princes. The king Don Fernando the Catholic used to instruct himself, even at the time of his diversions, for in hawking he used to listen to the dispatches which were read by a secretary, while he kept his eye upon the hawks. Don Emmanuel of Portugal used to give audience at the time of his recreation ‡. The abbot Suger, in his life of Louis-le-gros, says of Louis the prince, during the life of his father, “ this young hero, gay, conciliating all hearts, and endowed with a goodness, that made him be regarded by certain people as a simpleton, was hardly arrived at the age of puberty, when he shewed himself a courageous defender of his father’s kingdom ; he provided for the wants of the Churches, and he watched over the safety of labourers, artisans, and the poor §. Having become king, by the grace of God, he did not lose the habits which he had ac-

\* Savedra, I. 371.

† Savedra, II. 321.

‡ Savedra, I. 419.

§ Cap. ii.



quired in his youth ; he protected the Churches, sustained the poor and unhappy, and attended to the defence and to the peace of the kingdom \* : he made frequent expeditions into various parts to maintain the tranquillity of the Churches and of the poor." The abbot concludes thus, " It is the duty of kings to repress with their strong hand, and by the right of their office, the audacity of tyrants, who tear asunder the state by endless wars, and take a pleasure in pillaging the poor, and destroying the Churches." When the young prince Louis was to set out for Guienne, he went to take leave of his father, Louis-le-gros. None of the ancient patriarchs ever spoke to their children, before dying, with more religion than did this Catholic king in embracing his son. " I pray God, my dear son," said he, " that Almighty God, who gives authority to the kings of the earth, that he may extend his favourable hand over you, and those whom I give you for companions ; for if any fatal accident should befall you on the road, I could not survive that calamity. I have supplied you with all things necessary. Suffer not your troops to commit any devastation as they pass : take nothing without paying for it ; and when you arrive, live in such a manner that your new subjects from being your friends may not become your enemies." Then he wept and embraced him. Pignotti says, that Hugo the Great, duke of Tuscany, should rather have been called the just and pious : he was accustomed privately to visit the cottages of his rustic subjects, interrogate them upon the government and character of their sovereign, and listen to their answers, which were not marked by fear or adulation. His memory is venerated by the ecclesiastics. The abbey of Florence is one of the seven monasteries founded and richly endowed by him ; where his tomb

\* Id. cap. xiv.

and statue are to be seen, and where annually his praises are celebrated in a rhetorical declamation \*. Historians, in recording the accession of kings in these ages, are continually obliged to mention the joy and affection of the common people. Thus when Godfrey de Bouillon was elected king of Jerusalem, the old chronicle adds, “Dont tout le menu peuple en fut moult joyeulx, car moult l’aymoient †:” and describing the death of Baldwin, count of Thoulouse, it says, “et sachez que le dit conte fut merveilleusement plainct des grans et des petis par tout le pays, car il avoit bien employé tout son temps à l’honneur de Dieu et de la foy chrestienne, et fut grant dommage de sa mort pour la terre sainte ‡.” Mark the universal cry of sorrow, which resounded within the castle and town of Amboise on the death of Charles VIII., or that which was heard in Bruges on the death of Philip the Good. John le Maine thus breaks forth in praise of Philip I. king of Spain,

Le Roy des bons, du monde les délices,  
Le cultivateur des haults divins services,  
Le bien volu des povres et des riches.

And John Marot describing the departure of Louis XII. for Italy, says, that all men were equally afflicted at the thought of losing him, citizens, merchants, and mechanical people, and the poor rustic peasants; the latter of whom cry out, that they will arm and follow him.

C'est nostre Roy, nostre pere et appuy;  
Mieux nous vault morir en la bataille,  
Que de languir en douleur après luy §.

The monk of the abbey of St. Germain, who relates

\* History of Tuscany, c. v.

† Le grant voyage de Hierusalem, f. cxxii.

‡ Id. f. cxxvi.

§ Gouget, tom. XI. 14.

the birth of Philip Augustus, furnishes a remarkable evidence of the popular feeling respecting that prince; for he says, "the messenger who brought us the news arrived at the moment when we were finishing lauds with the canticle of the prophet, *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*, so that it almost seemed an oracle of the events which followed." The festival of the king's patron was every where a festival of public observance and rejoicing. "What happy reigns!" says Monteil, "when a whole people, transported with loyal gratitude, make the signs of their devotion for the saints the signs of their attachment to their king\*." The pieces of money of St. Louis which have reached our time are all pierced. They used to be worn round the neck, like relics, through veneration for the sainted king. It should be observed, in general, that there was nothing of oriental seclusion in the manners of the Catholic kings. They lived rather like pastors and fathers of the people. The emperor Rodolph would not suffer that any one should be denied entrance to him in his palace. "I am not emperor in order to be shut up in a cage," he used to say. "*Etiam fera animalia si clausa teneas virtutis obliviscuntur*," says Tacitus†. James I. king of Aragon, when young, being confined too strictly by his preceptors, made his escape and fled from the court, and for this love of freedom is proposed as a model to princes, by Don Diego Savedra. The difficulty with which Ramiere III. used to grant an audience seemed so monstrous a defect in a king, that the kingdom of Leon rebelled against him, solely on that ground. The king Don Fernando the Saint never refused it to any one, and every person, of whatever rank or condition, might penetrate into his most retired cabinets. The kings Don Alonso XII. and Don Enrique III., as also

\* Hist. des Français, IV.

† Hist. IV.

Don Ferdinand and Isabella, used to give public audience three times a week. When I was at Piltz, the king of Saxony used to dine with all his family in a great hall, at the end of which the peasants might enter, and numbers of the younger sort, barefooted and in their labouring dress, used to enjoy the spectacle. This was in the style of Charlemagne. Charles VII. and Francis I., from whose reigns may be dated the revolution which took place in the spirit and manners of society, were the first kings of France of the third race, who publicly transgressed the moral law. After those examples, there were secrets of palaces which it was important to conceal by a system of seclusion, and the free court of the Christian king was thenceforth to be sought only in chronicles of the past. The same causes operating among the people occasioned the disgracefulness of this concealment to be less noticed. When the first liberty of man, the liberty from sin, perished, the last that from force and necessity, which is called the liberty of nature, was not slow to follow: when the indulgence of Solon was admitted into morals, magistrates were soon obliged to introduce the rigour of Dracon into the police: but this was found a weak barrier against the opposing flood. Revolution therefore followed, and vain attempts to reconstitute society: “for,” as Pindar says, “it is easy even for the weakest to shake a city suddenly, but again to replace it in its seat is truly difficult, unless God should be a guide to its princes.”

ῥάδιον μὲν γὰρ πόλιν σεί—  
σαι καὶ φαιροτέροις· ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ χώ-  
ρας αὖθις ἔσσαι, δυσπαλὲς  
δὴ γίνεται ἐξαπίνας,  
εἰ μὴ θεὸς ἀγεμόνεσσι κυβερ-  
νατὴρ γένηται\*.

God was to be no longer a guide to its princes, and in vain therefore was all their labour. As St. Augustin had said, the blessed city was not to be entered without avoiding false religion\* ; nor was freedom to be secured by a people more docile to political than to religious laws ; for in proportion as man loses his religious docility, he will forfeit his real political freedom, and less submissive to God, he will be more dependant upon man. It was an ancient progress of mankind which followed. Every one wished to command, and fearing the domination of one, the people fell under that of many : the name of liberty was sounded on all sides, but the reality was soon diminished ; every man possessed it in idea ; but each day fewer in fact. At no period of the middle ages did Christian nations ever suffer such exactions, such servitude, and such losses as they experienced under the shadow of liberty, and the boast of advancing civilization : they reduced themselves to a state which might be described in the words of Tacitus, “*magis sine domino quam in libertate.*” And surely, we may add, while pride and hatred were thus seen instigating people against kings, and kings against people, to the mutual injury and dishonour of them both, it was made still clearer to the very eye of man than it could have been merely from the old experience of the peaceful life without its opposite, that even with regard to the fleeting interests of the present existence, the only secure policy was taught from the mountain, and that meekness diffused through the whole spirit and manners of a people, including both its legislation and its rulers, was the only basis of a lasting power ; the only security for real freedom.

\* De Civit. Dei, ii.

## CHAPTER V.

As when the pilgrim through an Alpine forest, losing the track of a path which fails abruptly, throws an anxious look on all sides through the dark labyrinth of mossy trunks, endeavouring to discover some woodman or returning guide, who might direct his steps; so now do I in vain desire to find some indication of a way that would conduct me to the end of this long argument, and to the opening of more happy scenes; for powers that rule must needs be conversant with evil, and “dark are earthly things, compared to things divine.”

So far we have viewed the obedience of men in ages of faith, to the spiritual and to the civil powers, the origin of these authorities, and the objects of their administration:—now I proceed to visit with you the ordinary walks of men in social life; to mark the general character of a Catholic state, and the effects of meek obedience to this twofold government upon the constitution of the race of men,—a visit which may even instruct some persons who have had the opportunity of forming a personal acquaintance with it; for wanderers in our age see the cities, but do not, like Ulysses, behold the mind of various nations\*. And first respecting this view of its meek obedience, its freedom and public virtue, we have not to fear that great question which Plato had to answer in his republic, namely, to shew whether such a state be possible, or in what manner it can be possible, *ὥς δυνατὴ αὕτη ἡ πολιτεία γενέσθαι* †. We are not driven to adopt his mode of escape, when he says, “Do you think that he would be a

\* Odys. lib. I. 3.

† Lib. V.



less good painter, who having made a portrait of the most perfectly beautiful person, and who had done all that art required, would yet be unable to prove that it was possible there might be such a man?" Though we may agree to his opinion when he asks, "Do you think it possible to do any thing exactly as one may say it, or is it consistent with nature ἡ φύσιν ἔχει that practice should have more correspondence with truth than language? he justly shews that in practice we can only arrive at an approximation to the perfect ideal. But in what has passed we have been concerned with no imaginary state of things, or mere theory of perfection. At each step we have rested upon historical facts; for let it be remembered, that sentiments and opinions taught as conveyed to us in ancient writings are themselves facts of history, and perhaps the only facts on which we can always depend. We have seen that the basis of all was in truth a religious idea, and that the immediate cause in operation was the virtue to which that idea gave birth; so that looking upon that religion and upon those manners, we may be obliged, as Plato says, to admit that whoever would embrace these, so as to become most like the men of ages of faith, would experience a fortune most similar to theirs; and after this it would be easy to discover and shew why the same harmony does not now exist in states, and on account of what cause they do not so much approximate to the ideal of happy society, and what circumstances, though very small, being changed (in speculation it would be a small change to substitute for protestations of independence, meekness, leading to a return of obedience to the holy see which would be sufficient), the state would be brought once more to favour, not as at present only the material and sensual, but the intellectual and spiritual interests of mankind. Modern writers in their contempt for these ages, besides having confounded causes to-

gether which had no connexion, have shewn that they never rightly understood society, as it had been formed by the Catholic religion. The greatest enemies of this religion of truth must admit a fact, which De Saint Victor says is as clear as the light of the sun—that it has developed the intelligence in all ranks of the social hierarchy, and to a degree of which no society of pagan antiquity can offer an example. Hence it followed that the people, properly speaking, could among Christian nations become free and enter into civil society, because every Catholic Christian, however ignorant and rude, has in himself, by his faith and by the perpetuity of instruction, a rule of manners and a principle of order sufficient to maintain him in this society without disturbing it; whereas the pagan multitude who had no such moral law, or who at least had very incomplete notions of it, was obliged to remain in a state of slavery, in order that it might not overthrow society. The moral history of the ages of faith proves the truth of this observation. In referring to it, reader, you are journeying to a Catholic land, “*id est*,” we may add in the language of Pliny, and with far greater justice than when he used it, “*ad homines maxime homines, ad liberos maxime liberos, qui jus a natura datum, virtute, meritis, amicitia, foedere denique et religione, tenuerunt* \*.” You are going to behold a state that is earthly, and therefore imperfect, composed of men, and therefore liable to a thousand disorders and afflictions; but it is a state constituted with an especial view to all the necessities and to all the noble capacities of the redeemed race that is destined to rise to a life immortal: it is a state in conformity with the principles of nature, in which the imagination, the purity, and the happiness of the youngest member, are deemed of greater im-

\* Epist. viii. 24.

portance than the thoughts and interest of the highest in the walks of commerce and ambition, and one in which gloom and proud severity, and merciless industry, are never suffered to enter under the mask of virtue. The apostles of nations, and the saintly kings who placed their crowns at the foot of the altar, founded these old Catholic monarchies, and as Pindar says of Hieron establishing the new city of *Ætna* upon the genuine Doric principles, they founded them "with heaven-built freedom\*." "Your solicitude for the public good," says St. Hilary of Poitiers to a government that was disposed to abuse its power, "your imperial vigils, in a word the whole labour of your sovereignty should have for object to secure for all those over whom it extends the sweetest of all treasures, liberty. There is no mode of appeasing troubles, and of reuniting what is divided, unless every one, emancipated from all the fetters of servitude, be able to live according to his choice†." "Impius et crudelis judicandus est qui libertati non favet," was the old Catholic maxim of English law. "Nihil autem gloriosius libertate, præter virtutem," says John of Salisbury, adding "si tamen libertas recte à virtute sejungitur," for to all wise persons it is clear, he continues, "that true liberty can proceed from nothing else : so that a man is virtuous as far as he is free, and free as far as he is virtuous. Vices alone bring men into slavery, to persons, and to things. What, therefore, is more amiable than liberty? What more favourable to one who has any reverence for virtue? We read that all good princes have promoted it, and that none have ever trampled upon liberty, but the manifest enemies of virtue‡." To think that the new religious systems which dis-

\* Pyth. I. 61.

† Epist. ad Constant. August.

‡ De Nugis Curialium, lib. VII. cap. xxv.

solved the ancient union of society have been favourable to political liberty, would in nations under their influence be every man's thought : no doubt, as Prince Henry says to Poins, he is " a blessed fellow who thinks as every man thinks : " and we may add, never a man's thought in the world kept the roadway better than that of Blackstone, who in eulogising Edward VI. and in reviling Mary, records the most oppressive and tyrannical laws enacted by the former, and the most just and mild laws enacted by the latter. Their principle has on the contrary been favourable to anarchy and despotism, though it may have met with contrary causes to neutralize its effects ; for as the learned father Ventura observes, " there are some people of Europe who although they have ceased for three centuries to believe, and to think catholically, yet in many respects have continued hitherto to live catholically ; and there are others who after monarchy has been destroyed, yet continue to be governed monarchally ; so that if they retain any thing true in matter of religion, or right in politics, it is not to be ascribed to their inventions or rebellions, whose institutions are of no weight, but to the ancient traditions of the Catholic religion, and of monarchy, which have not as yet been totally effaced ; but when these traditions and manners shall have vanished, then it will be manifest how pernicious was their departure from the true religion and from their just institutions \*." With regard to the religious element that entered into the constitution of a Catholic state, we may observe that Leibnitz recognised its necessity, and admired the exterior society of God and man, which he calls " the state the most perfect under the most perfect of monarchs ; " under which it is impossible for men to live as Isocrates

\* De Methodo Philosophandi. Roma, cap. II. art. 6.

described the Persians, "all their lives either insulting over others, or else servilely enslaved to others, which must of all things corrupt the nature of men\*." This really secured that spiritual excellence of government which Tacitus ascribed in a material sense to Nerva, saying, "*res olim inso-ciabiles miscuisset, imperium et libertatem.*" It was this element which inspired the desire and enhanced the real value of political freedom: witness what Don Savedra testifies of the Belgians in his time, that "they love religion and liberty, neither deceiving others nor enduring to be deceived †." The liberty, however, which was loved in these ages was not an abstraction, but a real personal exemption and immunity from the inconvenience and indignity of servitude. This is expressed even on the tomb of the Norman hero, Jourdan, son of Roger, on which was inscribed "*quantus fuit auctor domesticæ libertatis ipse devicta à Barbaris Sicilia demonstrat;*" and that under the influence of Christianity even the remains of pagan servitude were unattended with individual misery may be inferred from the fact, that when Louis X. published his ordinance, very few of the serfs desired to redeem themselves, so that the king by letters declared afterwards "that many have not known the greatness of the benefit which was offered to them." It must be remembered that until the fifth century there were in Gaul two distinct societies, the civil and religious, which differed not only in their object but also because they were governed by different principles. The civil society seemed to be Christian like the religious, but at the bottom it was in fact pagan; it derived from paganism its institutions, its laws, and its manners. The Christian civil society, as Guizot remarks, was not developed till later, after the invasion of the barba-

\* Panegy. 72.

† Christ. Prince, II. 384.

rians \* ; and we must carefully distinguish its action and institutions from the influence of the ancient legislation ; for the founders of Christian states had not the advantage which Plato ascribes to his ideal legislators : when a necessity fell upon the Christian clergy to apply the things which they contemplated in the regions of universal truth and order to the manners of men in public as well as in private, and not merely to form themselves, they were not, indeed, found bad artists to form temperance and justice, and all that belongs to the virtue of a people : for in employing their pencil, and in tracing that picture from a divine model, they constituted states which were highly favourable to the sanctification and eternal beatitude of men, but they were not permitted in the first instance, as Socrates required, to take as a piece of plain canvas the city and the manners of men, and make it clean, which he acknowledges would be no easy matter : they enjoyed no such distinction over all legislators, that they never were required to touch either an individual or a state, or to make laws before they either received or made it pure and clean †. They found the world polluted with all the vices of the old pagan civilization, and the new elements entrusted to them were wild and barbarous ; yet their deep and sweet colours succeeded at last in overpowering the almost inveterate and loathsome forms over which they had to work : their labour cannot be better described than in the very words of Plato. “ While painting the form of the state they continually turned their eyes from one to the other, that is, from what is essentially just and beautiful and wise, and all such things, to what actually takes place among men, blending and fashioning from these models the ideal of humanity τὸ ἀνδρείκελον, taking as their point of departure or

\* Cours d'Hist. Mod. IV.

† De Repub. lib. VI.



as their model that which Homer called as being among men *θεοειδές τε καὶ θεοείκελον* : and parts they effaced and parts they refreshed and repainted, until they rendered the manners of men as far as is possible worthy of being the object of divine love." This was their noble painting of a government, not "the unhistoric rational state on the revolutionary destructive principle, which Frederick Schlegel well denounces as clearly irreconcilable with Christianity and in opposition to it\*," but the 'Christian Catholic and holy state, according to whose law man was contained in the family, the family in the nation, the nation in religion, religion in the universe, the universe in the immensity of God,—that holy, just, and happy state, which really enjoyed what the ancient sages and poets ascribe without reason to some of their people ; for, in that of truth reigned, as Pindar says, *Eunomia*, or good legislation, and her sisters Justice and Peace, of congenial manners, the foundation of happy governments, and the dispensers of wealth to men †. Or as the same profound poet says of the Locrian Epizephyrius ‡, *ἀτρεκεία* governed their city, which word comprises all that is true in a government, integrity in manners, wisdom in legislation, and justice in the tribunals. Here was that harmony with that social order which Maximus of Tyre says is what saves a state §. Here was really found that unity, of the importance of which Plato had so profound a sense, that to secure it he had recourse in his speculations to those wild and extravagant conceits which are the disgrace of his noble work on the republic: to have unity he sacrifices every thing, and even the moral law of nature. His plan is ridiculous to the last degree, detestable, monstrous, but so much the more does it

\* Philosophie der Geschichte, II. 114.

† Olymp. X.

‡ Olymp. XIII.

§ XXII. 3.

prove the depth of his conviction, that unity in a state was essential to its happiness. Let it not be thought that I exaggerate in ascribing to the Catholic states of ages of faith, the advantage which seemed so admirable and so unattainable to Plato. Guizot is struck with observing the moral unity which prevailed in France during a period of such multitudinous divisions of territory as took place under the feudal system. He endeavours to account for it in this way. "It is because in the life of a people, the exterior and visible unity, the unity of name and of government, however important, is not the first; the most real is that which truly constitutes a nation. There is a unity more profound, more powerful, that which results, not from an identity of government and destiny, but from the similitude of social elements, from similitude of institutions, manners, ideas, sentiments, and languages, the unity which resides in the men themselves who are reunited in society, and not in the form of their approximation; in short, moral unity, far superior to political unity, and which can alone form its solid foundation\*." Perhaps the fact admitted might be accounted for in fewer words, but its decided recognition by such a writer is sufficiently remarkable. In a Catholic state one might have looked upon every person in every rank as one of a great but closely united family, possessing the same affections, entrusted with the same secrets, and acting from the same motives for the same end: this poor labourer, this young apprentice, this student, this soldier, this artisan, this king, had all the same sources of instruction and consolation as yourself. In the tribunal of penance, they had all been taught the same lessons and traditions, and had been all directed to the same end. In every other state, whether hea-

\* Cours d'Hist. Mod. tom. IV. 1.

then or modern, each man has his own motives, his own rule of right and wrong, his own end in view; perhaps he thinks virtues what you regard as sins, and sins against his type of perfection what you regard as the highest virtue: in the Catholic states there was only one standard even amidst desertions, only one morality understood even by those who departed from it, as there was but one faith: what an increase of public and social happiness resulted from such unity! It is true meek obedience was a prominent feature in this painting, but that this was not opposed to real freedom, or a source of servitude, has, perhaps, already been sufficiently shewn. Müller says, "with the Dorians, that comparatively free and noble people of antiquity, so great was the desire of unity in the state, that greater importance was attached to obedience than to the assertion of individual freedom\*." In fact, the Spartans considered an immunity from labour as constituting entire liberty. True, in Christian states there was degree and subordination of ranks, necessarily attended with an unequal distribution of the goods of this world,—

But government, though high, and low, and lower,  
Put into parts, did keep in one concert,  
Congruing in a full and natural close  
Like music —————

"Old men participate by the very law of nature in paternity," says Bonald, "and young men owe them deference: persons weak in mind or body, from sex or condition, participate in the claims of childhood, and require protection. Society is all paternity and dependance, rather than fraternity and equality†." The Gallic rioters of the ill-guided city talk of the fraternization of nations just as the great depopulators of the earth always affect to attach great

\* Hist. of the Dorians, book IV.

† Legislat. Prim. II. 75.

importance to population. The Church reminded men of a real fraternity, “*Hæc est vera fraternitas, quæ numquam potuit violari certamine : qui effuso sanguine secuti sunt Dominum.*” The patrimonial bond considered in its primitive purity is the sweetest form of human existence ;

*Fallitur egregio quisquis sub principe credit  
Servitium : nunquam libertas gratior extat  
Quam sub rege pio !*

never more grateful, and when allied to Christian manners, never more secure, for the political inventions of men are of less avail than the provisions of nature. “ This patrimonial bond,” says de Haller, “ is the lightest and gentlest that can be conceived ; it makes not the least encroachment upon the liberty of man. That which is generally styled domination and dependance consists only in voluntary and reciprocal engagements, in a mutual assistance and an exchange of benefits. Certainly, nature in forming this bond, and in uniting men only by a law of love, has shewn herself more affectionate towards us, her tender solicitude has provided better for our freedom, our happiness, and even our desire of a higher fortune, than all the philosophers with their pretended rational states, their arbitrary or constitutional associations, and their odious establishments of coercion \*.” It was characteristic of these ages, that while in all the relations and circumstances of social intercourse men were simple, natural, open to all the sweet and loving harmonies of life, unfettered by the trammels of false refinement, and the hateful barriers which pride would introduce between the different ranks of the great Christian family, they were, if I may so say, supernatural or alive to the

\* *Restaurat. de la Science Pol. tom. III. chap. liii.*

sublime elevation of things divine above the visible world in all the relations and circumstances of religion ; exactly as the converse is true with the moderns, who are miserably enslaved in their social intercourse while they affect to be natural in their religion, from opinions and manners which either destroy it altogether or render it so far from being natural, a system at total variance with what is really in harmony with the deepest sentiments of nature. We have an incidental and undesigned evidence of the union and happiness of the old societies of Europe in the description which the pilgrims have given of the states through which they passed. Thus brother Nicole, author of the famous voyage to Jerusalem, says of Venice : “ Chose superflue seroit a homme vouloir descrire la grant paix et concorde de que ont entre eulx les citoyens, seigneurs, et urbanité, magnificence, amour, benivolence par quoy leur chose publique par avant petite est devenue grande. Chascun le voit et apperçoit. Au surplus qui dira la grande religion ou foy qu'ils ont a Dieu, a sainte Eglise, et a toute la discipline ecclesiastique \* ? ” Anquetil says, “ that the subordination established among the clergy of Rheims in the time of Charles VII. became a model which the laity were anxious to imitate, and that the spirit of peace, union, and concord, the result of religion exercised in its purity, made all the inhabitants of the city like one and the same family †.” The moderns would think that he must not be an indifferent orator, who should undertake to prove, that in the ages of faith the people exercised an acknowledged and often effectual power in the state, but though we were persons always as hard to be convinced as Cebes ‡, nothing is less

\* Le grant voyage de Hierusalem. Paris, 1517. f. viii.

† Hist. de Rheims, lib. IV. p. 8.

‡ Plato, Phædo. 77.

questionable than that they did\*. We have seen that in the theory and practice of ecclesiastical rule, from which the civil was in a great measure modelled, the advice and interests of the community governed were always to be consulted. Accordingly we find in an article of a capitulary of Charlemagne, which commences with these words, “*Ut populus interrogetur de capitulis quæ in lege noviter addita sunt,*” that the emperor, not content with ordering his officers to read “*in mallo publico*” to the citizens of each territory, the laws newly made, desires besides that their opinion should be asked, and that each person should testify either by his signature or by his seal his acquiescence in the new ordinance†. However the modern politicians may deem such a reference unnecessary, we can only understand the reason and spirit of this ancient government by looking back to the origin and elements of the Christian society. In the first place, then, the people had priority of claims to its advantages inasmuch as religion commenced with them. The modern systems, unlike Christianity, began with the great and noble. In the first assembly of Huguenots in the year 1557, which was discovered in the street of St. James, at Paris, and dispersed by the populace, there were found among them many persons of the highest rank, and several ladies of the court, some of whom were in waiting upon the queen. From the first they had many gentlemen in their ranks who were ever ready to draw their swords and rush out upon the people as in the affair of the church of St. Marceau, where their fury was excited by hearing the bells tolling for vespers‡. In England and Germany, Protestantism introduced

\* *Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*, tom. xxxvii. 541.

† *Baluze Capit. An.* 819.

‡ *St. Victor Tableau de Paris*, tom. III. p. 27.



itself by the head of the state, by princes, and nobles, and magistrates, and men of letters, and descended slowly into the lower ranks. Christianity followed an opposite course ; it commenced in the plebeian classes, with the poor and ignorant, the faith ascended by degrees into the higher ranks, and reached at length the imperial throne. It is a remark of Chateaubriand, too just to be rejected, “ that the two impressions of these two origins have remained distinct in the two communions\*.” The same difference continues in the propagation of the two religions. By the preaching and miracles of St. Francis Xavier, the whole kingdom of Travancor embraced the Catholic religion with the exception of the king and the chief men of his court†. In the missions of the Protestants, it is invariably the higher classes which furnish them with a favourable soil. So little alive are they to the natural inference from this startling fact, that in magnifying their national religions they always speak of their happy effects in giving some certain tone to high society or to literature or in contributing to some worldly advantage, which virtually belongs alone to the ranks above the poor. There is in truth always a secret tendency in the higher classes to disdain the company of the shepherds at Bethlehem, and to follow where the fishermen had led. The poor shepherds believed the angel, and the rich will not believe apostles, prophets, angels, or the Triune Eternal God who sends them. The name of Paganus was affected for a long time by certain great families, though it attested the original paganism of some member‡. It is only perhaps at Rome in our age, where nobles generally are seen to contend with the poor in speed to seek

\* Discours Hist. Pref.

† Bouhours, I. 129.

‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocese de Paris, XI. 104.

Christ. To the observation of Chateaubriand we may add, that in the political doctrine of states and legislations, the two impressions of the two religions are still discernible. While the moderns have alternately rejected or exaggerated the doctrine of the popular power, the great writers of the middle age maintained it within its just proportion. St. Thomas, for instance, said, “that since law was given for the general good, it was not the reason of any individual that could make law, but that of the multitude or of the prince who stood in place of it\*.” Cardinal Bellarmin placed no mediate power between the people and God, but he supposes the people to be between the king and God. Suarez † confirms this doctrine by the authority of St. Ambrose, St. Gregory the Great, and St. Augustin. Liguori speaks to the same effect. “It is certain,” he says, “that power is given to men of making laws, but this power as it respects civil laws belongs by nature to no one, but only to the community, and from this it is transferred to one or to more by whom the community is governed ‡.” Fenelon also says, “the temporal power comes from the community which is called the nation §,” and Bossuet says, “no one denies that the power of kings is not in such a manner from God, but that it is also by the consent of the people ||.” The Abbe de la Mennais shews that this doctrine of St. Thomas and other theologians is not to be confounded with that of Jurieu and Rousseau, which they defended under the name of sovereignty of the people, which supposes that the people have no other law but their own will, which creates justice, whereas Catholic theologians lay

\* 1, 2, 9, 90, A. III.—Id. 97 ad 3.

† Defens. Fidei Cathol. lib. III. cap. ii.

‡ De Legibus, I. Tract. II. p. 104.

§ Tom. XXII.

|| Defens. V. cap. xxi.

down as a principle, that the people as well as an individual is subject to the divine law of justice, essentially independent of its will, and promulgated by the conscience of the human race. Aware of all the abuses to which the exercise of that right is liable, which cannot however destroy that right, they have with St. Thomas endeavoured to guard against them, saying, "a tyrannical government is unjust, being ordained not for the common good, but for the private good of the ruler. Therefore, the disturbance of this rule is not sedition, unless when the overthrow of tyranny is so inordinately pursued, that the multitude suffers more from the disturbance than from the existence of the government\*." In fact, during ages of faith, though the popular power was generally exercised in a legal resistance, which sufficiently preserved society from the dangers of a reckless revolution, yet the greatest monarchs had occasion to feel the necessity of guarding against its expression in a less orderly form; but true to the origin of its emancipation, it was seldom formidable excepting in defence of its religion. Hence it was that Savedra warns kings and their ministers never to meddle with religion, or commence a contest with ecclesiastics, because, he adds, "this will kindle the fury of the people against them†." Charles V. so feared the people, that he decreed public prayers and processions through all Spain, to obtain the deliverance of the pontiff, whom his own troops kept prisoner in Italy. With the heathen sentiments of a false and unattainable liberty, the moderns also adopted their expressions of contempt and hatred for the lower orders of the state; expressions which, in a Christian society, are both unjust and opposed to the original laws and institutions of

\* Sum. 22. 9. 42, Art. II. ad 3.

† Christian Prince, I. 566.

government. In ages of faith, the people were not that vulgar spoken of by Cicero, in whom "is no counsel, no reason, no discrimination, no diligence; whose actions, while suffered by wise men, were seldom to be praised \*:" the majority of whom were evil, as Pylades said to Orestes †; whom no poet was ever to address, as Theognis, the Megarian, said of the peasants of his native land, ranking them with the wicked; they were not that Athenian people described by Demosthenes "the most treacherous of all things, changeable as the wind upon the inconstant sea ‡;" not that democracy whose gifts, as the moderns would infer, are always a Cyclopiian grace, to destroy others first and their friends last. The Divine Saviour taught men not to be so proudly ready to rail at the multitude, and had left them his example in those gracious words benign, "misereor super turbam §." Moreover, the constitution of a Christian state recognized them as entitled to every protection, and secured the perpetuity of institutions founded by charity for their advantage. The Church claimed them as the objects of her especial love, and formed them by her discipline to become what they still continue, in every Catholic country, when not perverted by the policy, and driven to exasperation by the injustice of rulers, a most innocent, joyous, and engaging race, whose name might no longer be taken for that of a nation, but seems to be rather that of Christian intelligence. The Church prayed oftener for the people, than for kings. She wished, that their approval might accompany her elections, and she indicated its necessity for kings in the ceremony of their coronation. The first grand objects which meet the eye in the capital of her government derive their title from the people; as if to remind

\* Orat. pro C. Plancio, IV.

† De fals. Legat.

‡ Eurip. Iph. in Taur. 670.

§ S. Matt. viii. 2.

men of that ancient discipline, which lasted in practice till the xiii<sup>th</sup> century, and which continues always in spirit to distinguish ecclesiastical rule : it is through the gate of the people that you enter Rome, and the first church, of St. Mary, which presents itself to the pilgrim, is also entitled of the people : many of her solemn and holy orders have their especial missions to console and assist the people ; and it is among the lower classes, who, as Bonald says, are always in the first age of society ; it is among the devout multitude, who come from far over the mountains in peaceful pilgrimage to Alvernia, or to the blessed house which crowns the eastern shore of Italy, or to the rock of the archangel which beheld his bright vision beside the Adriatic, that the piety, and simplicity, and innocence of ages of faith may still be found,—not amidst the disdainful assembly of those who meet in the chapels of some proud metropolis, to display their charms, or their grandeur, in the appropriated tribunes that are formed to separate them from the poor. Let the haughty rich men, who legislate in favour of their philosophy, bear these facts in mind, and let them at least respect the right of prior possession. The Catholic religion, with all its seeds of future fruit to be developed at the Church's pleasure, embraced by the poor, was here established before them : they found it here ; it is no upstart : they did not vote it into existence ; a majority of their voices was not required for its establishment, as in that scene among the American savages, who lately decided for Christianity by rising from their seats. They were not once consulted about it. But let us consider other objections which are usually advanced against the political state, in ages of faith : let us come to the question of *Æschylus*—who next is ranged here against the city ? It is objected then, that there were not those political debates, to discuss measures of government, which are now thought so essential

to the happiness of every virtuous and free people. Much might be advanced in reply. The action of the Catholic religion in ages of faith necessarily secured domestic liberty from falling a victim to the immoderate licence of assemblies \*. Unskilful men, rude and ignorant of political relations, had other pleasures, other means of exercising their intellectual activity, besides sitting down as in a theatre to listen to the discourse of sophists, to hear “these fellows of infinite tongue,” these ten thousand loquacious youths who make incessant speeches, birdwitted chirruppers, whose only muse is that of swallows, to hear money-changers speaking on institutions of piety, and lawers on education. Besides, the people knew too well their own interest to desire the rule of the multitude, and to wait for the mutual revelations of a Cleon and the sausage-seller †, though to hear such wrangling may be joy to vulgar minds. It is a remark of Savedra, and repeated by De Haller, that every numerous assembly, although composed of chosen men, and more or less cultivated, nevertheless, in many respects, resembles the populace: modern history proves that they are subject to the same passions, and impelled by that sanguine eloquence, that exaggerated expression, which is so uncongenial with philosophy, equally insensible to the dictates of justice. “The great crowd of men has a blind heart,” says Pindar.

—— τυφλὸν δ' ἔχει  
ἦτορ ὄμιλος ἀνδρῶν ὁ πλείστος ‡.

The government by assemblies feeds the love of contention and the love of honours, which Plato reckons among the greatest evils of an ill-constituted state §:

\* Cicero pro L. Flacco.

† Nem. Od. VII.

‡ Aristoph. Equites.

§ De Repub. VIII.



and when there is a foundation of error in principle, it subjects states to frequent variations. No one knows how to fix the bounds of liberty and the confines of servitude: on the contrary, there is seen a mixture of servitude and licence. "Liberty becomes only a word with the people who wish to have power to do every thing, and with the nobles who wish to subdue every thing." This is said by the great historian of Florence\*. A government of this kind secretly nourishes the love of riches, because it in fact participates in the character of an oligarchy, and as Socrates says, virtue has the same relation to wealth that exists between any two objects in a balance, of which each has always a force acting contrary to the other, so that riches and rich men being honoured, virtue and good men will be dishonoured of necessity†. Moreover, such a government would have been contrary to those habits of thoughtful retirement, and of a holy life, which were deemed of far greater value than any worldly interests whatever. Pindar ascribes the love of bold harangues to those who are fond of drunken banquets,

Θαρσαλία δὲ παρὰ  
κρατῆρα φωνὰ γίνεται ‡.

The Romans under their kings received the abstinence of the Pythagoreans, and under their consuls the luxury of Epicurus. It was a maxim of the Christian philosophy to beware of the tumult of men, and as far as possible to avoid being drawn into the controversies of the world, "cito enim inquinamur vanitate, et captivamur." The churches were the places of assembly for Christians, and their lips were opened to sing the praises of God. Ah! seek me there, they would have replied to those who

\* Lib. IV.

† De Repub. lib. VIII.

‡ Nem. IX.

desired them to repair to political debates, approach the Divine altars, before which you will find me prostrate,

————— Non me impia namque  
Tartara habent tristesque umbræ; sed amœna piorum  
Concilia, Elysiumque colo \*.

We find that the great moralists of antiquity had sentiments not different from Christians in ages of faith respecting the public or rhetorical life. The maxim of the Pythagoreans was celebrated; Plutarch, in his treatise on education, advises parents to keep their children as far as is possible from the vanity of wishing to appear before an assembly of the commons; and he cites some lines of Euripides, which Amyot thus translates:

Langue je n'ay diserte et affilée  
Pour harenguer devant une assemblée,  
Car qui scait mieulx au gré d'un peuple dire  
Est bien souvent entre sages le pire.

————— οἱ δ' ἐν σοφοῖς  
φαῦλοι, παρ' ὅχλῳ μουσικώτεροι λέγειν.

“Those,” he continues, “who acquire a habit of extempore speaking, besides contracting other faults, tombent en une merveilleux superfluité de langage,” as Amyot translates it, and thus become accustomed to utter “an infinity of impertinent and vain things:” and what an additional evil would have followed when these impertinent and vain things were to pass into laws. “The liberals of every country,” says Potter, who is himself a liberal, “commit the unpardonable fault of wishing to reform ideas, (great reform they would effect no doubt) by laws. They know not that to torment, vex, and outrage men is

\* Æneid, V. 733.

a bad way to convince them, and that to destroy is not to change\*." Pindar says, "it is impossible that a deceitful citizen should deliver an effective speech among good men†;" but among those who form the majority of hearers in an assembly, the humble simplicity of real political truth would be laughed out of countenance, to make place for the theories of men, who, as Florent Galli says, "by nature noble endeavour to recover in politics the dignity which they have lost in morals." This was the result of the enquiry which Socrates instituted among men famed for political science: he found that those men who enjoyed the greatest reputation for wisdom, when examined, as if before God, were found most wanting, whereas others that seemed simpler were men really more near to wisdom‡. The man who would correspond in his own life to the best constituted state, says Plato, must love the muse, and love to hear, but he must not be a rhetorician, φιλόμουσον καὶ φιλήκοον, ῥητορικὸν δ' οὐδαμῶς §. "If any one," says Cicero, "omitting the right and honest studies of reason and duty, should consume all his work in the exercise of speaking, there will be nourished a citizen useless to himself, and pernicious to his country ||;" one whose least offence and injury, as the history of a later age proves, will be when his tongue, like a fan of sedition, excites the assembly of the poor. Have you never heard of the Loupgarou? asks Socrates; I believe, he continues, that this is, in fact, some democratic leader, polluted in tongue and hands, and now of necessity become a wolf, after having been a man during life¶. But it is not to be inferred from these remarks, that the

\* Union des Catholiques et des Libéraux dans les Pays-bas.

† Pyth. II.

‡ Plato Apolog. XXII.

§ De Repub. VIII.

|| De Inventione, lib. I. 1.

¶ De Repub. lib. VIII.

spirit of this society was opposed to the great judicial and legislative councils of a nation: on the contrary, the ecclesiastical assemblies, so free and wisely constituted, were a model imitated in the civil order; and the very principle of opposition was derived from their forms, in which men, who had reasonable objections to advance, were exhorted boldly to produce them for the love of God\*. They were not, indeed, to quarrel about who should save the state, like Ulysses and Diomede, and still less to seek only their own glory, desiring to be the sole authors of the action, and conspiring against all others who should endeavour to assist their country, as Ulysses, when he determined to kill Diomede, when he carried off the Palladium; but the people were, without doubt, represented in the general assemblies. In France the kings of the first race, as in the constitution of Childebert I., express their will as the result of an universal consent. "We all assembled, of every condition, together with our nobles, have resolved, *nos omnes congregati de quibuscumque conditionibus una cum optimatibus* †." And we find in the annals of St. Bertin, that the people were convened to the assembly at Nimegue, in the year 831,—*Percunctatus est populus—a cuncto qui aderat populo judicatum est* ‡. We may conclude, therefore, from such passages, as also from what we have before shewn, that the people exercised real power in the state; but this is carefully to be distinguished from that voice of sophists, which is sometimes called public opinion, the object of execration to Plato and to all truly wise men in every age in which it existed; but in the middle ages it did not exist in the ordinary sense of the term. The language of Socrates on this point is peculiarly interest-

\* In the Rite of Ordination for Deacons.

† Baluse, tom. I. capit. an. 595

‡ D. Bouquet, VI. 173.

ing ; and it will furnish the best answer to those who despise the state of society in the middle ages, on account of not being able to discover in them the action of that public opinion which he condemns. Mark, for instance, what a reply he furnishes to those sophists who maintain, that holy wise men living in religious retreat are the corruptors and deceivers of the young, and that the public opinion, and the world in general, by all which they mean only the voice of their own party, would form them better. "Truly, this would be a great happiness for the young, if one or a few only corrupted them, and the rest of men were for setting them right\*." In the *Gorgias* he evinces the same judgment respecting this public opinion. "Ask any one of these if it be not so?" is the appeal of Polus the sophist, to which Socrates replies ; "O Polus, I am not one of the politicians ; and last year when my tribe had the privilege, and it was necessary for me to compute the suffrages, and to refer them to the council, I caused a great laughter, not knowing how to set about it. Therefore do not desire me now to appeal to the judgment of the company ; I know how to produce one witness, the person with whom I discourse ; but as for the public, I salute it and let it pass. I know how to collect the vote of one person ; but to the multitude I do not even speak †." In ages of faith it was not the supposed voice of this multitude which, as Plato says, really perfected the education of the young, making them and all others whatever it wished them to be, both young and old, men and women ; they were not formed by that noisy and intemperate public opinion, which he describes as one might write of it in our own times, as a sound re-echoed in all the public assemblies, in the tribunals, in the theatres, in the camps. It is true the com-

\* Plato *Apolog.* XXV.

† Plato *Gorgias*.

mon judgment of Christian ages was not different from the private instructions of education ; but if it had been otherwise formed and developed, there would have been an end of harmony in the state ; for no private education could have resisted this influence, and the young would have been carried away by the public expression of blame and praise, in whatever direction they, impelled them. So that without taking into account what Socrates adds respecting the deeds which sophists united with their instructions, in punishing with dishonour and with penalties those whom they could not convince by reason, deeds now witnessed within the loathsome towers of Ham in Gallic land, we may conclude with his words, that certainly there was no private instructor who could have overcome this contrary impulse, had it existed, that the mere attempt to produce one would have been madness ; and since that power, whatever it may be called, is wielded, not in reality by the people, but by the sophists who come forward in its name, the absence of so tremendous a danger in ages of faith should be only an additional reason to feel convinced that their state was eminently happy. And here an observation is suggested, which respects latter ages, rather than the past ; for who does not perceive that the two camps now opposed to each other, those who adhere to the wisdom of Christian antiquity, and those who support a system contrary to it, are, as far as respects nature, differently affected by the action of this great intellectual and moral power ? The former being children of the Catholic Church, accustomed to union, and sweet conformity with all around them, when placed in a different society, the influence of its opinion and manners has an unnatural force, derived from their laudable disinclination to be singular ; whereas, on the contrary, those who protest against the principles of the Catholic religion are



never so secure and so fierce as when in a Catholic country, where they enjoy in the greatest perfection their favourite privilege of singularity. The concluding sentence of Socrates, in the fifth book of the Republic, is very remarkable. "For neither is there, nor was there, nor can there ever be any system of education favourable to virtue capable of resisting this general opinion of society, that is, human system, O comrade, for I except from our discourse what is divine: and you ought to know well, that in such a condition of the state, when the multitude are thus disposed, if any one should be saved, and should become what he ought to be, you will not err in saying that he has been saved by an especial providence of God. Besides this, you should remark that these private instructors, who give lessons for money, and whom the multitude call sophists, regarding them as their rivals and opposition pedagogues, teach nothing else but the opinions of this very multitude, whose passions they study to please, as if it were a great animal, which they desired to understand thoroughly. Whoever lives with the multitude, presenting it either with a poem or some other work of art, or public service, making the multitude his master more than is right—must do all the things that will please it, of Diomedian necessity. Have you ever heard such a man giving a reason to show why and in what manner, in reality, things are good, and honourable, and fair, which was not altogether laughable and ridiculous? Certainly not; for they study only what seems good, and honourable, and fair, to the brutish multitude." So far Socrates. "It is impossible to express," says Montaigne, "how much our mind loses and degenerates by the constant commerce and acquaintance with low and diseased souls. There is no contagion which spreads like that." It is not too much to affirm, that to the absence of a power capable of extending

this contagion beyond even the ability of natural causes must be ascribed in a great measure, not only the spiritual happiness of society, during the ages of faith, but also the phenomenon which they present in the prodigious fruitfulness of nature in giving birth to men of extraordinary virtue and greatness of soul : and “how many excellent spirits,” as Savedra says, “how many generous characters did then spring up and die unknown, which would have been the admiration of the whole world, if they had been once employed!” Does it seem against the evidence of history to affirm this? But even several modern writers themselves acknowledge its truth. “Another advantage,” says Guizot, “from studying the history of the middle ages is political. Our time may be characterized by a certain weakness, a certain softness in minds and manners. Individual wills and convictions want energy and confidence : men take up a common opinion, obey a general impulse, and yield to an exterior necessity. Whether it be for resistance or for action, no one has a great idea of his own force, or any confidence in his own thought. Individuality, in a word, the intimate and personal energy of man, is weak and timid. Amidst the progress of general liberty many men seem to have lost the noble and powerful sentiment of their own liberty. Such was not the middle age : the social condition then was deplorable,” (these writers, like painters, employ shades to make their sentences picturesque) “but in many men individuality was strong, and will energetic : the moral nature of man appeared here and there, in all its grandeur, and with all its power \*.” Bonald saw the difference and indicated the cause. “We have become so accustomed to think only in a crowd, to speak only in public, to think on laws only in a committee,

\* Cours d’ Hist. IV. 1.

to discuss them only in the courts, to establish them only by a majority of voices, that the most learned and able men feel afraid as soon as they are alone, and do not dare to move a step without that noise, often imaginary, which they call the public opinion \*." Let us meet another objection, and reply to those who accuse society in these ages of being wanting in industry and activity, the grand criterion of modern civilization. It was an ancient argument, that the Christian religion tended to the downfall of the empire, and modern sophists have resumed it, affirming that it is too spiritual, too inducive to carelessness for the things of earth, and therefore hurtful to the interests of society. Machiavel, speaking of the effects of Catholic instruction in withdrawing the mind from earthly interests, proposes that children should no longer be made familiar with the names of saints, who inspire contempt for temporal grandeur, but with the names of gentile captains which may inspire them with military courage †. On such subjects, it is well to present our apology in the words of the ancient sages, because the moderns will not accuse them of being under the influence of "that execrable superstition" which Pliny spoke of, and to which these ages clung with such unwearied ardour. The Athenian then, in Plato, extols the laws of Crete as securing to the state all good: "but the good of a state," he says, "is two-fold, being both human and divine; and both of these depend upon the Divinity; and if any city should receive the greater good, it will possess also the latter; but if not, it will be deprived of both: and the lesser good consists in health, and beauty, and strength, and agility, and riches, not such as are blind, but those which with clear sight follow virtue; but the

\* Législat. Primit. I.

† Discorsi sulle decadi de Tito Livio. I. 12. & 41.

first and greater good consists in temperance, and chastity, and justice, and a manly spirit: and a legislator must always attend to this order in whatever he ordains, making what is human wait upon the divine \*.” “Neither a state nor a man can be happy, unless by means of a life of wisdom and justice, being under the dominion of holy men as rulers, and being brought up in virtuous manners †.” Socrates says that he used to address each of his countrymen with these words; “O best of men, being an Athenian, native of the greatest city, and most illustrious for wisdom and power, are you not ashamed to be occupied about money, about making as much of it as possible, and gaining reputation and honours, while you neglect the study of truth, and take no thought for your soul, ὅπως ὥς βελτίστη ἔσται ‡?” There was no industry or activity in ages of faith, say the moderns; but there was industry, and activity, and subtle intelligence, in those matters which even the heathen sage thought alone deserving of human care, as having relation to intellectual wants, and to the future existence. Hæc magna, hæc divina, hæc sempiterna sunt. Was it for the illuminated race, upon whom the glory of the Lord had shone, when the nations walked in his light, and kings in the brightness of his rising,—was it for them, we may ask, to devote their lives to the pursuit of objects which had been rejected even by sages, as unworthy of man’s nature, while darkness covered the earth, and a mist the people? Was it for them to prepare the way of the modern societies, by neglecting the spiritual interests of their posterity, while for themselves, “engrossing and piling up the cankered heaps of strange-achieved gold?” They pursued no ends of utility, we are told;

\* De Legibus, lib. I.

† Plato Epist. viii.

‡ Plato Apolog. XXX.

but it was from a perfect conviction of the comparative inutility of all concerns to which death must put an end, that they gave that ecclesiastical and spiritual direction to society, which now is considered so injurious; indicating, no doubt, a mind resembling that to which Cicero alludes, weaned from the love of vanities, and placing its strength for living virtuously in the contempt of all human things\*. But nothing can be simpler than the whole of this problem: our desires are always according to our habits; the old fisherman in Plautus only delights in finding gold, at the idea of being able to build a great ship†. In ages of faith, Christians had no other object in desiring money than that they might be able to build a church, or a monastery, for they were not accustomed to luxuries which would have given them a different view of the importance of money. Do we suppose, that if it had been deemed useful or noble to construct club-houses, exchanges, and theatres, the cities of the middle age would not have possessed many monuments, like those in the streets of Vivien and St. James? It was then considered more useful to make foundations of a spiritual order, and therefore we behold instead, the abbeys of St. Germain and Westminster. Machiavel and the other politicians of that school speak disdainfully of the Catholic religion, precisely from the same cause which led the Jews and Gentiles to despise Christ. His voluntary humiliation and subjection reprov'd their pride; and the moderns ascribe to ignorance, and weakness, and indolence, what was the legitimate result of the profound mysteries of the Christian religion. They pretend to read the ancient poets and sages with admiration, and yet their testimony is strong in favour of these characteristics of society in the middle age, which are now condemned. "The minds of mortal

\* Tusc. I. 40.

† Rudens, IV. 2.

men," says Pindar, "are quicker to praise deceitful gain than justice; but it is necessary for you and for me to accommodate our manners to justice, to prepare for ourselves future happiness\*." Thus, indeed, spoke the universal reason, and the primal traditions; but if he had consulted only the opinions of the philosophers, he could never have approached so near to the sentiments of the ages we defend, for in speaking of the errors of men, he says, that it is impossible to discover what is now and in future the best thing for man to obtain,

τοῦτο δ' ἀμάχανον εὔρειν,  
ὅτι νῦν καὶ ἐν τελευ-  
τῇ φέρτατον ἀνδρὶ τυχεῖν †.

And St. Augustin relates from the testimony of the learned Varro, that there were no less than two hundred and eighty opinions among the philosophers respecting the chief good of man: they were at such a loss to know in what it consisted ‡. If then they rightly extol Pindar for forming such a judgment amidst so many difficulties, with what injustice do they condemn the consistent policy of the ages of faith, which had so exact a knowledge of the supreme good, and which pursued it with such singleness of eye, following it even through the beautiful regions of imagination and poetry! "But for that politic blessedness ought not to be the last mark of a Christian man," says the old translator of Tasso, "but he ought to look more high, that is to everlasting felicity; for this cause Godfrey doth not desire to win the earthly Jerusalem to have therein only temporal dominion, but because herein may be celebrated the worship of God, and that the holy sepul-

\* Pyth. IV.

† Olymp. VII.

‡ De Civit. Dei, XIX.



chre may be the more visited of godly strangers and devout pilgrims: and the poem is closed with the prayers of Godfrey, to shew that the understanding being travailed and wearied in civil actions, ought in the end to rest in devotion, and in the contemplation of the eternal blessedness of the other most happy and immortal life." It passed even into a proverb with the Spaniards that devout people who, like Godfrey,—

—— Full of zeal, and faith, esteemed light  
All worldly honour, empire, treasure, might :

"that all is nothing in this world if it tend not to the next," and that he who has much on the earth has but little in heaven. Men in those ages did not labour with such indefatigable anxiety in making the earth yield its utmost, for their hearts were not so much set upon it, and seeking pearls and finding the one of great price, all their ambition was to procure it; they no longer sought after these visible things, lest they might lose the things invisible, and become like Ely the priest, who had his eyesight so weak that he could not see the lamp of God which hung continually lighted in the temple. "The soul which loves God," says a writer of those times, "has not leisure to think of any thing else but him, or to be occupied about other things besides him: it disdains, it despises all the rest." "Nil grande, nil pretiosum et admirabile, nil reputatione appareat dignum, nil altum, nihil vere laudabile et desiderabile, nisi quod æternum est:" this judgment gave rise to the real spirit which influenced men; they who had drank from the river of Paradise felt no more, as St. Augustin says, "the thirst of this world." How can we wonder that it produced its natural effects? The ascetical writer of the middle

age, who is the author of the Manual ascribed to St. Augustin, devotes one chapter to shewing that men ought to avoid and detest every thing which turns aside the soul from the contemplation of God \*. Surely such wisdom was incompatible with the industry of the children of this world, or of men in whom there seems to be neither an actual, nor virtual, nor habitual, nor interpretative intention of being Christians, men who through their ardent passion for every thing sensual must needs labour constantly for riches in order that they may be able to gratify their senses. The man, therefore, who is ἐπιθυμητικὸν, as Plato † says, will consistently embrace the modern philosophy, but he cannot with justice argue against the intelligence of others who pursued a different end by different measures. Cicero even remarked that they who refused to render themselves servants to lust and to ambition had no occasion for the daily expenses which involved others in the necessity of making money. “Why,” he asks, “should they greatly desire to have money, or rather why should they care for it at all ‡?” With greater justice might they exclaim, in answer to the magnifiers of such industry : O brother,

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Call to mind from whence ye sprang ;  
 Ye were not form'd to live the life of brutes,  
 But virtue to pursue and knowledge high §.

Ah! the hearts of men in ages of faith responded to that voice from some undiscovered cell in holy cloisters which sung the hymn of “Jesu dulcedo cordium,” which in one sense is falsely ascribed to St. Bernard, though in another it justly belongs to him, and to all who had sat beneath his feet :

\* Cap. xxx.

† Tuscul. V. 32.

‡ De Repub. IX.

§ Dante.

Quando cor nostrum visitas,  
Tunc lucet ei veritas,  
Mundi vilesceit vanitas,  
Et intus fervet caritas.

which, perhaps, in the English version has still greater simplicity.

Thy lovely presence shines so clear  
Through ev'ry sense and way,  
That souls which once have seen thee near,  
See all things else decay.

Reasoners who take into account only the apparent material interests of the present life can never form a just judgment of the Christian political state, or of the men who formed it: but in the ascetical writings of the middle ages, in the festivals and in the prayers of the Church, they may discover the secret, without ascending to the source, which explains the cause of all that excites their pity and disdain. Ambition, as an universally pervading principle, and the incentives to activity in merely earthly interests, received necessarily a mortal wound in that society, which recognised and made ample provisions for the wisdom of desiring to die to this world, and of wishing to be despised for Christ, and of remaining unknown in the present life. The calm of the ancient Catholic state proceeded not from indolence, for what society ever gave greater proof of intellectual activity? but from the suppression of passions. As the sea is beheld tranquil, when no breath of air moves upon the surface, so the mind of man was at rest, and human life passed in a sweet calm, when the perturbations were removed which have power to disturb it. Upon reading the motto of an illustrious and royal race of the middle ages "non laborant neque nent," a favourable occasion is furnished for sophists to give the reins to long discourse

respecting the inaction and indolence of Christian antiquity; but they should remember that these are the words of the Son of God proposing an example of life to his disciples, and that they were borne as a device without implying a satire upon manners in ages when men were quite as sharp-sighted to detect moral deformity as in our own. But the result alone of the two disciplines might determine their respective merits. And how astonishing is the delusion practised here? Those who were invited to the marriage feast in the Gospel, says Father Diego de Stella, "thought it better for them to travail about their business with pain than to be partakers in peace of the solemn feast of the eternal King. If the King of heaven had invited them to travail, and the world unto pleasures and ease, they might well have been excused, but when it is all contrary, then is the error too manifest if thou shouldest despise the sweet service of Christ for the displeasing servitude of the devil\*." The nations of the north who have refused the invitation to the solemn feast affect now to despise devout poetic Spain, and spiritual Italy, who have in successive ages accepted it; but we see how they suffer from their own tyrannic wills:—formerly blessed with sweet peace, and nourished with the bread of angels, they are now condemned to eat that of care and sadness, to behold violence and bloody strife within their streets, which day and night resound with moans: and what after all is the spirit of industry as expressed in the character of the proud? Where is this great moral dignity spoken of, in the men who are unwilling to accept the invitation of the almighty King, "who was in earth for their sakes crucified," and who prefer going away in sullen disdain to their farms or to their affairs when the Church invites them to rejoice and

\* On the Contempt of the World, p. 11.

rest? Even omitting all reference to heaven, on what ground are we to reserve our admiration for these men, who, as Lucian says, “spend many sleepless nights, and painfully laborious and sometimes bloody days, not for the sake of Helen or of Priam, but through hope of gaining five oboli?” What claims does this spirit possess to the praise of virtue? Tacitus paints it well in describing Vinius, “Audax, callidus, promptus et, prout animum intendisset, pravus aut industrius, eadem vi \*.” If we examine the true cause of the perpetual agitation in which men pass their lives, where the supernatural motives of faith do not exist, we shall understand why in a Catholic state in ages of faith there was less occasion and provision for it. To all men who are of the number that look back, it is an insupportable pain to think of themselves, so that all their care is to forget themselves, and to live without reflection in being occupied with things which leave no time for thought. “This,” says Paschal, “is the origin of all the tumultuous occupations of men. The great object is not to feel one’s self, and to avoid the bitterness and interior disgust which the thought of one’s self would necessarily occasion. The soul finds nothing in itself which contents it, nothing but affliction, therefore it is obliged to fly abroad and to lose the remembrance of its real state in application to external things which may wear the semblance of honesty or duty. Its joy consists in this forgetfulness, and to see itself, and to be with itself, is enough to render it miserable. Hence men are loaded with infinite cares, and labours which occupy them from the break of day. You might think that the course of their lives was purposely contrived to render them unhappy, but it is necessary for their peace: so that even what little time remains to them after their

† Hist. lib. I. 48.

affairs must be spent in some diversions, in order that they may never be for a moment with themselves. This it is which makes them court such interminable labours of body and mind, which makes them men of business engaged from morning till night, men of dissipation devoted to a thousand diversions which must occupy their whole souls, for it is impossible that those who act only by the movements which they find in themselves and in their nature should ever subsist in repose and leisure without being instantly attacked by melancholy and sadness." But in a Catholic state in ages of faith the case was otherwise, for as Paschal says, "it is one of the wonders of the Christian religion to reconcile man to himself in reconciling him to God, to render the view of himself supportable, and to make solitude and repose more agreeable to many than agitation and the commerce of men." Hence we can understand why the moderns are happy in London or Paris, and find themselves oppressed with melancholy in Rome or Valladolid; why they prefer a Brentford hustings to the Dome of the Vatican, and a manufactory to a convent. That a just and reasonable industry, corresponding with that divine judgment which did not condemn Martha, as St. Augustin says, but only distinguished the gift, and consistent with the noble intelligence of Christians, was not wanting in the ancient states may well be understood from many evidences. Deguignes has written a treatise upon the Commerce of the Middle Ages, containing, amidst many false and exaggerated statements, curious details\*. Not to speak of the celebrated commerce of Venice, Pisa, and Genoa, it appears that in the reign of Chilperic the Franks had many vessels on the Mediterranean, that the trade of Marseilles continued to flourish as under the

\* Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions, tom. XXXVII.



Romans, and that even in the interior of France the Oriental languages were cultivated in consequence of the commercial relations maintained with the countries of the East. In the time of Clovis, there were merchants at Paris who made frequent voyages to Syria. Under the Carlovingian princes the commerce of the Mediterranean was a source of riches to France. In the ninth century, the Lyonnese and the Marseillaise imported spices and perfumes from India and Arabia, which were transported by the Rhone and the Saone to the Moselle, whence they were distributed by the Rhein, the Mein, and the Nekar, to the extremities of Germany. The interests of commerce were not unconnected with the pilgrimages to Palestine and the crusades which followed. Deguignes exposes the immense projects of policy and commerce, associated with views of religion, which were developed by writers in the time of Philippe-le-Bel. The tin of Cornwall used to be transported by means of the Loire to the gates of Digeon, to form pinnacles for the monasteries of Burgundy\*; the merchants of Dieppe and Rouen, in the fourteenth century, carried on an extensive trade with Africa, where they founded great establishments: yet in general the knowledge of these facts has been transmitted only by incidental testimonies. It appears also, that the population of France and England in the middle ages, equalled that of our times. The Pope, at the Council of Clermont, spoke of France as being hardly able to contain the multitude of its inhabitants. The country was rich and well cultivated, as is proved by the immensity and variety of the royal and seignorial rights. One of the first observations made by the pilgrim brother Nicole, during his first day's journey in the Holy Land from Jaffa, was that the land was good but ill cultivated

\* Bibliothec. Cluniacens.

by the labourers \*. This implies that he was accustomed to see good farming. The mere fruits of the earth maintained Spain so rich in former times, that Louis IX., King of France, being at the court of Toledo in the time of Don Alonso, was lost in astonishment at its splendour, and said that he had never seen any thing comparable neither in Europe nor in Asia. Yet a vast part of Spain is incapable of much cultivation. With respect to England, there is reason to believe that tracts which had been reclaimed and cultivated by the monks have in later ages been suffered to return to their original barrenness. We shall have occasion in another place to speak of the multitude of monuments with which faith covered the soil of Europe; for the present one may be allowed to suggest, that the richly cultivated garden of the plains of Lombardy, or the lovely shores of Chiavera, do not indicate a less degree of the industry of man, because beautiful churches and graceful oratories are seen to rise at every step amidst the vines and corn; that a seaport city, like Genoa, does not impress a stranger with a less opinion of its commercial activity, because he hears during the still hour that precedes the dawn the faint music of innumerable bells summoning to matins choirs of saintly men and women, whose monasteries are thickly scattered over the surrounding mountains clothed with the pale olive. "*Sed plena errorum sunt omnia:*" the moderns cannot, it seems, recognise an industry which does not exclude all considerations of a spiritual order, and all sweet remembrances of a future country. Villani is to be extolled above all the ecclesiastical and noble historians of the middle age, because he chiefly studies what belongs to the material interests of the people, the operations of trade, the price of corn, the quality

\* Le grant voyage de Hierusal. f. xiii.

of the food and drink, which can only be learned by induction from the latter, as Deguignes complains; and a tyrant who destroys the liberty of education, and who pursues a systematic plan to undermine all intellectual good, is to be praised as a wise, magnanimous prince, because he encourages the breed of cattle and makes the markets thrive. How else would men legislate if they were providing a city for brute swine? So asks one in Plato, after hearing a similar plan for forming a city, *Εἰ δὲ ὑῶν πόλιν κατεσκεύαζες, τί ἂν αὐτοὺς ἄλλο ἢ ταῦτα ἐχόρταζες*\*; At the same time one may admit, that there is a wisdom of self preservation shown by these societies which rest entirely upon material interests, materializing all interests and deriving their security from this forced reunion of all individual wills, when they look with a jealous eye upon Catholicism, and endeavour to exclude those who profess it; for in consequence of the spirituality of this religion, it must be in perpetual contradiction with their principles and maxims, and it would become in some sort an instrument of disorder for the mechanics who govern that state and give motion to its springs. But let us mend our speed, for we draw near the opening of sweeter ways. I shall endeavour to compress in as small a space as possible the remaining subjects of reflection suggested by a review of the ancient political state in ages of faith.

In the first place, I observe, there was a consistency between all things, material and intellectual, and the manners of men were in harmony with their institutions. The contrast which Coleridge draws between the genuine and artificial poets, might be found to exist between different forms of society. Of the modern customs and institutions, "lay aside the titles and the ornaments, translate them into another

\* De Repub. II.

tongue, and it will be a matter of wonder to you that such trivialisms, not to say such nonsense occasionally, could ever be received and perpetuated." Apply the same process to those of the ages of faith. Lay the body of an institution, or of a custom, bare; decompose it to the utmost of your power: the beauty, and grace, and poetry, may, indeed, be destroyed, yet good sense will, in every instance, remain conspicuous, as the substance or body of the whole. The first lines of the prologue of the Salic law are an instance in point:—"The nation of the Franks having God for founder, strong in arms, firm in keeping treaties, profound in council, noble in person, beautiful in complexion, valiant in combat, but lately converted to the Catholic faith, free from heresy;—and even, while under a barbarous belief, seeking, by the inspiration of God, the key of knowledge, desiring justice, and guarding piety." It is said, this might be the text of an heroic song; but compare it, in respect to the strict truth of its testimony, with the received formulas of the modern society, where such strange inconsistencies have been introduced by retaining the language, and rejecting the philosophy, of Christian antiquity, and every one must be struck with the justice of this distinction. But the perfect Christian consistency of the ancient state is one cause why the modern historians are almost invariably mistaken in their representation of it. It is with their style, as with that of Ephorus and Hermippus, in which, as Müller says, no one could recognise the ancient simplicity and loveliness which characterized all the genuine remains of the age of Lycurgus; for our modern historians, too, endeavour to assimilate as much as possible the notions of antiquity to those of their own time, and to attempt, in some way or other, to represent every deed as proceeding from such motives as would have actuated their own contemporaries. Machiavel was the first of a similar

school. In his history of Florence his views are not Christian respecting the events of society. His very language is pagan; and in order to imitate the dark and fearful sentences of Tacitus, he seems to forget that he is relating the history of a state which was no longer under the impressions of paganism. Nor can I omit mention of that other characteristic of the institutions and customs of the middle ages, which consisted in their indicating habits of meditation on the life of Christ, and on all the circumstances and mysteries of the Gospel history with which they were in harmony, or, at least, reconcileable; in the same manner as it is characteristic of the modern legislation, and form of life, to exhibit a forgetfulness of the doctrine of Christ, and of all the circumstances of the history of his Church, to such a degree as to be often absolutely irreconcilable with the practice of that religion.

Another characteristic, I observe, is the settled composure of the Catholic state, like that of the ancient Dorian, which seems entitled to respect when contrasted with the versatile talents of the moderns, who set no limits to their love of change, and with whom society is only a bond of convention, which the will of the people can dissolve, like a tent which the shepherd pitches for one night and which he takes down at break of day. In opposition to the modern opinion, we may believe what is written in the ethic page, that it is not men remarkable for virtue who make revolutions, for they would be few against the many\*. "The great object of a wise and truly civilized state," as Frederic Schlegel says, "is to preserve men from becoming wild, and from degenerating into a savage state. Every revolution is a passing epoch of a savage state, when man, notwithstanding single examples of heroic virtue, and wonder-

\* Aristotle Polit. lib. V. c. iv.

ful self-devotion, is, in fact, reduced to the character of a savage. There is always a propensity in his nature to become wild and savage, and it is the great object of all wise government to guard against this by all means possible \*." Again, one must admire (though French and English politicians regard it as sufficient evidence of a tyranny) its principle of self-defence, when contrasted with the revolutionary passion for attack, and conquest, and overthrow of existing constitutions. Like the Dorian, too, its power was not purchased, but native; its policy was slow and deliberate conviction against determined rashness; its essence a unity of feeling and principles, so as to make the whole body become as it were one moral agent; its object in administration to obtain good order, or *κόσμος*, the regular combination of different elements. Another remarkable characteristic of the middle ages was the importance attached to ancient customs, and their maintenance by a judgment and a power superior to all legislative enactments, and in defiance of all the novelties that private reasoners might advocate. Montaigne well understood the excellence of this society. "Qui mettroit mes rêveries en compte, au préjudice de la plus chétive loi de son village, ou opinion, ou coutume, il se feroit grand tort, et encore autant à moi." These are his words. The barbarians had respected the rights of the nations which they conquered, so that the ancient customs still prevailed in each province; and not only had these the force of law, but it was even permitted to each man to choose under what customs he would be governed, whether as a Roman or a Frank, a Burgundian or a German. "Populus interrogetur, quali vult lege vivere, et sub ea vivat †." If we pay attention to the particular tendency of each

\* Philosophie der Geschichte, I. 47.

† Baluz. II. an. 824.



of these customs, we shall find it still indicating the superior wisdom of a Catholic state to all the enactments as well as theories of modern sophists, of which every characteristic, however liberal in denomination, is, at the bottom, something that Plato, to say nothing of Christianity, would term ἀνελεύθερον, and very often φιλοχρήματον. The Catholic state was the most natural of all others, that is, it was founded with the highest art ; for to be natural is the most difficult triumph of all works of mind, since in laws as in arts, in morals as in manners, what is false, bad, and unnatural, presents itself to our mind of itself. And Bonald quotes Quintilian, saying, “ id est maxime naturale quod natura fieri optime patitur.” Again, the public mind of a Catholic community had a love for past times, and a great attachment to the memory of its ancestors. Like the Doric race, though on additional grounds, and without its extravagance, the attention of that society was turned to the past, rather than to the future ; and here was still further indication of a happy state : for, speaking of the living faith of a whole people as constituting its natural strength, De Haller says, “ it is remarkable, that wherever a people is distinguished by a love for their ancient chronicles, wherever they desire to know the history of their country, wherever the glorious events which have founded, aggrandized, and consolidated the social bond, are generally recalled and celebrated by music or chaunts, one will find that there the greatest freedom prevails, and the abuses of power are least known\*.” I have alluded to the unity of the Catholic state, by which it obtained the object of all legislation, according to the ancient sages. The great object with Plato would be to guard against the natural tendency of men to pursue private ends ; “ for without laws,” he says, “ men would neither know nor

\* Restaurat. tom. III. 30.

be able to follow what is best; they would not know, in political science, that the general interest is to be pursued before private, for the former consolidates, but the latter dissolves states; they would not know, that it is for the advantage both of the whole society, and of each member, that the general interest should be preferred to the individual; and if they did know it, but were to find themselves independent, and not responsible, they would not be able to persevere in the opinion and practice; for the mortal nature inclines always ἐπὶ πλεονεξίαν καὶ ιδιοπραγίαν, flying from pain and pursuing pleasure, and regarding both before justice, and involving itself in darkness, so as in the end to fill itself, and the whole state, with all manner of evil\*.” What an assistance was here furnished by the Catholic principles, and how surely did they operate! The social order was compact and firm, and needed no propping with arbitrary laws: the authority of chiefs was strong, the consent of orders was inviolate; judgments were maintained; the minds of good men were ready at the nod of the Christian pastors, and always was there found a citizen who would expose himself to envy for the safety of his country. As the Athenian proposed in Plato, it was held that the state, like one man, should live virtuously†; and temperance and meekness were deemed as necessary in the state as in a man‡. This was the mark at which all aimed in life, both with regard to public and private affairs, that the state as well as each individual might cultivate justice and temperance with a view to happiness; not allowing all things to cupidity, the desire of satisfying which is an interminable evil, and reduces men and states to lead the life of robbers; for with the desire to gratify every passion, they can be friends neither to

\* De Legibus, lib. IX.

† De Legibus, lib. VIII.

‡ Id. lib. IV.

man nor to God\*. The nation, as one suppliant, sent up prayers to heaven, that virtue might be granted to obedient youth, rest to placid age, and to the whole, collectively, wealth, and offspring, and every honour. "That as the temporal generation contributed to the ornament of the world, so by an admirable effect of the grace and providence of God, the spiritual generation might serve to the augmentation of his Church†." The whole character and desire of the state might have been expressed in the words which we read upon the great obelisk of the Vatican, "*Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat, Christus ab omni malo plebem suam defendat.*" "Of all religions," says De Haller, "the Catholic is without question the most proper to maintain an union of hearts and minds, and to preserve the internal tranquillity of states: not only because the form of the Church is monarchal, and therefore analogous to that of kingdoms; for we shall prove hereafter that it agrees equally well with republics; but because it is founded on obedience to legitimate authority, and not on independence of all authority; on respect, and not on contempt for fathers and mothers; on the denial, and not on the idolizing, of self; on the reciprocal sacrifice of one for another, which is the bond of all society, and not on egotism, which is its solvent and destruction; on the bond of an immense community, united by the same faith and the same law, and not on a principle of hatred, of isolation, and of dispersion; in fine, because in its dogmas, in its morality, and in its worship, it teaches, nourishes, and vivifies without ceasing, respect for the maxims and traditions of fathers and superiors; veneration for all that is ancient, universal, perpetual; and repugnance against all separations, and all fundamental innovations‡."

\* Plato Gorgias.

† Missal Rom.

‡ Tom. III. chap. I.

But all rested on the maintenance of piety, in order that, according to the converse of Cicero's celebrated sentence, piety prevailing, faith and the society of the human race, and justice, the most excellent of all things, might be established. Hence, then, arose the necessity for preserving the public mind from being corrupted by the perverse and immoral wills of a few. Though the moderns have chosen to discard these precautions, the wisdom of the ancient measures remains justified. The private error makes first the public error, and then, in its turn, the public error makes the private error. This is what Montaigne said. The Athenian disputant in Plato would subject the stage to a severe censorship, and no piece should be performed until the censors had determined that it contained nothing contrary to the spirit of the legislature \*. In what manner Socrates would have determined the question now so much discussed, relative to the justice or prudence of restraints upon literature and the arts, may be concluded with certainty from the famous passage in the Republic relative to poets, and, indeed, from the general tenor of the Platonic writings. Plato expressly says that a legislator should inflict a great fine upon any poet or other member of the state who should sing of men living happily, being wicked †. He would not suffer any thing to be published derogatory to the noble images of piety and heroism which should exalt the imagination of youth ‡. Chateaubriand has done well in adding to the pompous inscription over the library of Thebes, in Egypt, “*ψυχῆς ἰατρεῖον*, deposit of the remedies and of the poisons of the soul.” In Catholic states alone we still behold this great primal object of all wise and just government faithfully maintained, that of preserving the eyes and ears of

\* De Legibus, VIII.

† De Legibus, lib. II.

‡ Id. lib. III.

men from blasphemies against the good power in heaven, and of shielding defenceless youth from the accursed darts of reason, swayed by lust, or cunning avarice, such as in every other city are levelled at them, which way soever they move, or turn, or bend their sight.

At Rome, where more than in any other city of the world each man feels himself personally free, any violation of public morals, by temptation, is guarded against like murder; and, indeed, owing to circumstances which we cannot delay to unfold, and which require the physician rather than the divine, more effectually prevented than manslaughter. We find S. Bernard complaining in energetic terms, as an extraordinary circumstance, of the circulation of dangerous works. In allusion to those of Abailard he says "violent leaves are scattered on highways; books fly; in cities and in castles darkness is received for light; and poison is administered instead of honey. They pass from nation to nation, and from kingdoms to another people\*." So great an evil was this considered, that bishops even refrained from publishing in their dioceses pontifical constitutions which condemned errors that were there unknown, fearing lest it might introduce the knowledge of them; therefore the fathers of a council in 1528 decreed that in public assemblies the doctrines of the heretics should be only reproved in general terms in all places where they were unknown. Under Philip I. the licence of the French songsters proceeded to such a length, that Yves, bishop of Chartres, thought himself obliged to procure the interposition of the Holy See†. Philip Augustus, on coming to the crown, made severe regulations against licentious poets, banishing from court all those who employed their abilities to corrupt men. For this end, no doubt, it was necessary that power and an efficient force should belong to the

\* Epist. 189.

† Epist. 68.

government of the state. But let it be remembered while the administration was strong to repress the obstacles to the sanctification of souls, it did not sully the source of all intellectual and moral good, by attempting under the name of liberty to destroy the freedom of the Church, which is its immediate fountain. Plato proposed a hard question, "How can a state or city make use of philosophy so as not to corrupt and destroy it?" And instead of giving a satisfactory reply, he only suggests, that all great things are subject to ruin, and that every excellence involves a difficulty\*. But if it were asked how did the state, in ages of faith, avail itself of the celestial wisdom without injuring it, the reply might be instantly made, by leaving the Church, which imparted it, free, only ensuring its protection or co-operating with its laws.

This would be the place to speak of the creative spirit which belonged to the ancient Catholic society; but as nearly the whole of the present and following books will be a developement of this truth, I shall only observe here, what a singular contrast the history of later ages presents in this respect. Destruction follows the sophists in all their plans of constitution. Without authority and meekness corresponding, men are unable to found any thing: thus in France, when every institution was falling to the ground, thrones, altars, monasteries, hospitals, and laws, they always professed the desire to reconstruct, to save, and to direct, as De Haller witnesses in the very words, Constituent, Committee of Public Safety, and Directory. The later history of the northern nations bears the same testimony, during periods of long tranquillity, and of an immense accumulation of wealth in noble families, which would have favoured the spirit of institution, if it had existed. Such,

\* De Repub. lib. VI.



then, are a few of the general reflections that may be suggested by a review of the government and society of a Catholic state, in ages of faith: others, indeed, sufficiently obvious, relative to the disorders which the passions of men introduced into it, have already, no doubt, presented themselves to our minds; and perhaps readers of the modern school are ready to cry out with open mouths, as if they had overshot Robin Hood, that these were times of violence and desolation, and not such as are here represented; but granting that such disorders were found to exist; granting, I say, what they will have granted, the truth of what we have now seen continues no less certain; it is incontrovertible; and though such an exercise must be most painful to persons of their intellectual habits, so little prepared for encountering any trouble or difficulty in the way of a ready conclusion, the grand criterion of having profited under their masters, the task which devolves upon them, is to reconcile this view of history, which is so new to them, with the disorders and horrors which have been so long familiar to them; but with which they by no means had the exclusive privilege of being acquainted, as perhaps in a future place it will be necessary to demonstrate. As for those real lovers of truth, and real scholars, willing, but unable, to rise from the study of history with such agreeable impressions, from their familiarity with a multitude of facts which seem to contradict them, there is a reflection which I would humbly suggest, from which one would infer that they ought rather to fear the consequences of their own timidity, which may be quite as injurious to truth as a groundless confidence. It is for the sake of truth that they should dismiss their fears, and unhesitatingly follow those who find in the history of ages of faith an idea full of grandeur and peaceful delight. For, in fact, how stand they with regard to truth? They read the learned antiquarian

works of the great Benedictine and ecclesiastical writers of the last century, devoted to particular investigations, which rendered it necessary to comprise within a few pages the crimes and follies of many generations of men. Thus they become insensible to the general tone of sanctity which belonged to society in these ages. No doubt the researches of a Mabillon, a Chardon, a Fleury, and others in that track, have their importance ; but they do not supersede the use of simpler and less valuable works, which only give a general and comprehensive review of the periods which these acute and profound men have analysed, with a view to some particular object of curiosity : without this, the result, in the reader's mind, is a distorted and unjust conclusion, a right estimate, perhaps, of particular questions, but unquestionably an erroneous judgment of the general character of society. At the present, I proceed to notice the opinion of those who, in Gallic phrase, set forth the progress which has been made in civilization ; and the observations I have to make will conduct us to our wonted stage of rest. "The ancients did not resemble us in this respect," says a sophist to Socrates, "because they were unable, and not sufficiently wise, for the art of wisdom with us has made a great progress since their time." "So that," says Socrates, pretending to finish the sentence, "if Bias were alive again, he would be subject to your ridicule, in the same manner as Dædalus would now be laughed at, as the makers of statues affirm, if he were to fabricate any of those objects which bear his name?" "It is so," replies the sophist. "Indeed I am persuaded that you speak truly," continues Socrates, "for I have this evidence ; I know that Gorgias and Prodicus have grown immensely rich in consequence of their application to public affairs ; but as for these ancients, no one ever thought them worthy of receiving money as a recompense for their

skill. They were so simple and foolish, that they seem not to have known the value of money, whereas each of these modern 'talented' men (our ancient language had no term adequate to express such proficient) makes more by his wisdom than any mechanic by his trade." "And yet, O Socrates," cries the sophist, not perceiving the higher thoughts of genius, "you really know nothing of this glory of ours; for if you were to hear what sums of money I have made, you would be astonished. To omit other things, when I was in Sicily, though Protagoras was there in the height of reputation, yet in a very short time I made more than 150 minæ, and from one little place, Inichus, I had more than twenty minæ, and so I came home bearing such gifts with me, that the other citizens were lost in astonishment; and I think that I must have made more money than any other two of the sophists that you could name." "*Καλόν γε καὶ μέγα τεκμήριον σοφίας τῶν νῦν ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχαίους, ὅσον διαφέρουσι,*" replies Socrates. "Truly the ancients were strangely ignorant, for many of them experienced a fortune the very reverse of yours; and they despised, and neglected, and lost all these things, so foolish was their wisdom: *λέγουσι δὲ καὶ περὶ ἄλλων τῶν παλαιῶν ἕτερα τοιαῦτα.* You have given, by what you now advance, an abundant proof of the superiority of the moderns; for, as the saying is, the wise man must especially be wise for himself, and this is the criterion of all, whoever is able to make most money\*." How can we, other little men, presume to refute arguments which Socrates thought unanswerable? One may only pity the ancient writers for not being aware of the moral perfectibility to which human society is always necessarily advancing. Thus Thucydides, describing the horrors and atrocities which

\* Plato Hippias major.

attended the sedition of Corcyra, is so incorrect in language, as to add respecting the circumstances, “such things occurred, and always will occur, as long as the nature of men continues the same” “*ἕως ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾗ* \*.” So far behind now appears to us his famed sagacity!

The theory of the perfectibility of human society, as understood by the political sophists who now maintain it, is admirably convenient for those who have an antipathy to the proof of facts, and the lessons of experience, conveyed in history; it suits delightfully those who love to indulge in vague generalities and common places void of sense, who are fond of ambiguous emphatic phrases, and the language of exaggeration. It is only unfortunate that they are not the first to suppose that antiquity is forgot, custom unknown, and as it were that “the world is now but to begin.” Such vaunts have risen before to Him, “whose eye nothing new surveys.” The followers of Laertes, in attacking the king of Denmark, have forestalled them here; and in fact, in every revolution of men, there were always some to cry, “the world is now but to begin!” The only novelty presented in the present circumstances of mankind is, that such a cry should have imposed on genius; and that the Christian poet of ill-guided France should have thought that he beheld the social state, and the human race fast advancing to perfection, in an age when men seem to speed only in the way of proud indifference to intellectual good, of systematic opposition to the beneficent will of Heaven, and to the immortal destinies of their nature. It is sad, no doubt, to have to contend with the adversaries of the cross; there is no literary glory to gain in such a contest: he who attacks them will pass away with them, and be forgotten with them;

but men must not seek to ennoble their cause through disdain of seeming to contend with a base enemy, and so adopt the very tone and spirit of times to which they deem themselves superior. “*Est non parva prudentia, silere in tempore malo, nec humano iudicio disturbari.*” “The idea of the endless perfectibility of men,” said Frederick Schlegel, “as long as it is merely admitted to argue a possible disposition, contains, no doubt, much truth; but only while it is accompanied with a sense of quite as great a corruptibility of men\*.” In the ages of faith it was well understood that religion herself, in one sense, sanctions the idea of a progress. “Posterity,” says Vincent of Lerins, “will rejoice in understanding what antiquity formerly venerated without understanding; but you must teach the same things which you have learned, so that while you teach in a new manner, you may not teach new things; but perchance some one will say, will then the Church of Christ make no progress in religion? Clearly it will, and a great one: for who is there so envious to men, and so adverse to God, as to endeavour to prohibit that? But only it will be a real progress, and not a change of faith. The intelligence, science and wisdom of each, and of all men, as of the whole Church, and of whole ages, will increase, but in their own manner only; it will be a progress in the same doctrine and in the same sense†.” With respect to the supposed progress of civil society, if we consider merely the effects of human agency, it is, in fact, only a change and oscillation of good and evil: if it advances in one direction, it recedes in another: like the ocean, the tide of human passions and of man’s wickedness may lose on one side of society, but it will be found to gain on the contrary: the sea itself will remain as wide and

\* Philosophie der Geschichte, I. 233.

† Vincen. Lirinensis, 27, 28.

as deep as ever. Sins and miseries will always be found in the earthly city, and abuses and imperfections must attend its government. In ages of faith there were not wanting subjects who knew that in whatever manner they were governed, by a few, or by many, or by one, it would be always a government liable to inconvenience. It was not for them, as said the meek Hildegard, who so holily admonished kings to throw off the discipline of the fear of God, and impelled by madness to ascend to the tops of the mountains, and to accuse rulers; while their temerity was not to accuse their own wicked deeds. "In fact," concludes Savedra, "freedom consists not in the search of this or that form of government, but in the preservation of that which long custom has established, experience sanctioned, in which justice is observed and public order maintained\*." The real evils which should make men hope for a progress in society, the spiritual tyranny of rulers, would be impossible to any practical and permanent extent, if subjects retained the fervour and the virtue of the ages of faith; but fallen as they are in this respect, we may deplore the evils in the government of states, but it is not to them first, that any wise politician would think of administering a remedy. In the meanwhile, if the question of Glaucus† were to be addressed to us, "which of the states now existing do you regard as in accordance with the love of wisdom, and favourable to that love?" we might sorrowfully reply, in the words of Socrates, "absolutely there is not one;" nay, I will add this accusation, and affirm that independent of what has been preserved from the ages of faith, and what must be ascribed to them, there is not one state now existing, if we except that whose emblem are the keys, and perhaps some few small principalities, like that which boasts

\* Christ. Prince, II. 355.

† Plato, De Repub. VI.



of its red lily, or families united in federative bond, encircled with the snow-clad Alps, worthy of the philosophic nature.

Therefore philosophy, and that is now nothing else but the Catholic religion, is tormented, and being, as far as its earthly contingencies extend, perverted from its nature, as a foreign seed sown in an unsuitable soil, it degenerates and assumes a character partaking of the qualities of that new soil; and though, being divine and imperishable, there is no power sufficient entirely to extirpate it or totally to change its genuine qualities, still there is furnished occasion for its enemies to fancy themselves strong, who, armed with the force of the civil government, labour to paralyze the exertions of the Catholic Church, and then hope to convict it of inefficiency. Thus in one region they deprive youth of the means of a religious education, and will suffer no other schools to be maintained but such as would suit Turks or pagans : hence we are shewn officers in military command and natural philosophers of fifteen, and atheists of twenty; in another they violently or treacherously seize the property which was destined to support missions, and to erect sanctuaries, and throw all the weight of their influence on the side opposed to the true philosophy, while they employ immense riches in endeavouring to undermine it: they succeed at length in producing an indifference to all distinctions between truth and error, faith and infidelity; the laws of the religious society are lowered and assimilated to their own; hence men of supernatural motives are diminished; and the uniformity of the sophists, a very different thing from the union of Catholics, is established. No one class of subjects is left as generally known to be essentially different in principle from another: you shew men avaricious? So are all: you shew them proud, luxurious, ambitious, degraded in philosophy, per-

verted in politics, vitiated in taste, materialized in understanding? So are all: as far, at least, as depends upon the effects of the general influence. In another, again, they take away the churches, they take away the monasteries, they endeavour to take away days of religious rest, for adoring God, instructing men, and filling society with joy, they deprive Catholics of the means of assembling to worship God in the beauty of holiness, leaving an immense population without the means of approaching the divine altars, or of being regularly and constantly instructed in their duty; they make laws to prevent the foundation of institutions which would support, direct, and sanctify them; they expose them defenceless and calumniated to the mercy of an armed and insane fanaticism, which their riches nourish and their honours flatter: hence follow successive generations of men, sensuous, and ignorant, unaccustomed to order, insensible to all the harmonies of a social state; knowing the law only as an enemy, and government as a detested image subservient to the very principle of evil; reckless of life and of all that wait on honourable reputation, cruel, revengeful, desperate, sanguinary; all this is then exultingly produced by the adversaries of the holy wisdom as ground that justifies their rejecting it; they challenge enquiry, not into abstract truth, not into the testimony of the universal reason, of the great traditions of the Church, or of the race of men, but into the consequences of their own artful policy and injustice; and who can think of denying them the merit of success, or of attempting to depreciate its importance? They appeal to the consequences, not of those measures and institutions which the Church would pursue in order to render men virtuous and happy, and without which she pronounces it impossible to form or preserve a state of society worthy of Christians, for they have declared by their

legislation that she must abandon these, and they have forcibly taken them from her ; but of the limited exertions which they, concluding against her judgment, have prescribed to her, and which she has long since judged from her profound estimate of human nature, and from her long experience of the conduct of men, to be wholly insufficient. What Catholic then can be anxious to demonstrate against the overwhelming facts which they adduce, that her fears were groundless, and that her estimate of human nature was mistaken ? But if philosophy, if the Catholic religion should meet with the best constituted state, or rather if it should not be bent and paralyzed by a state professing contrary principles, then, indeed, being also itself the best of things, it will be seen by all men to be in reality, not only in the little world of separate souls, but in the great and general society of nations, divine ; while every thing else, whether of nature or of custom, or of profession, is human, insecure, momentary, worthless, full of some moral deformity, opposed to innocence and mercy, to truth and justice, to the sweet enjoyment of private happiness, and to the beautiful reign of universal order. The worldly policy has prevailed over the divine, even among the kingdoms that acknowledge Christ. The institutions founded upon faith in the spirit of earlier times either have already been overthrown, or are paralyzed and rendered fruitless by the civil legislation ; the new system may bring with it, as the historian of the Doric race says, by the mockery of fate, though it would be more correct to say, by the secret design of highest God who doth guide that fate, external fame and victory ; but still will the humble and really philosophic mind recur with satisfaction to the intellectual union and spiritual harmony which existed in the ancient Catholic state, even while its external and material frame may have been shaken with the tempest of human passions, and its

sweet peace, vexed by man's injustice, still will honour, and freedom, and moral dignity, and angelic meekness, claim it as the scene of their long and sweet abode, while they had a mission to descend and dwell with men.

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## CHAPTER VI.

WE have not completely escaped from the perils of this discourse on the social system of the middle ages, until we shall have more fully explained in what manner the institution and privileges of the noble classes in days of feudal law were consistent, or at least compatible, with the spirit of meekness. It seemed, indeed, a difficult thing to unite political power with humility; and to shew that mild courtesy of manner might distinguish the simple unlettered people in the rank of lower subjects, appeared a task of no less difficulty, and now when we are required to reconcile the institutions of feodality and the lives of powerful nobles with the full and free development of that meekness which was to qualify men for beatitude, one may imagine, that we are about to be overwhelmed and to succumb. I might say in the Platonic style, that "having but just escaped from two mighty waves, you now by this question make to rush upon me the greatest and most difficult of the Trichymia\*," that is, you ask whether I can demonstrate that such an union was possible, and that it did exist. It will be found as we advance, that I am not ignorant of the particular evils which disturbed this ancient society, nor of the

\* De Repub. V.

violence and oppression which not unfrequently distinguished the lives of some great men of the earth, whose old blood and forefathers' gallant deeds made them haughty in those very ages when the number of the meek was most considerable. I am not standing forth as the champion of any political system, nor does the renown of nobility, whether it be exalted or diminished, affect in my mind any of those bright and primal images which we would invite to accompany us as a protection, through all the mortal changes, sanctifying our joy, and following us from the banquet of youth to save our hearts from desolation when left to the thoughts of night and solitude. It is no pleasure to be detained within these palaces of the great, when we had hoped to hasten to the lawns and groves, and to converse with the meek and joyous people that live amidst them, dwelling with nature and with poverty; but the object of this argument requires that I should remove the objection founded on the assumed incompatibility of the feudal life with meekness: and even a sense of what all men owe to truth would induce one to shew that the general sentence passed by modern writers upon the institutions and manners of nobility in the middle ages is essentially unjust and unsanctioned by the evidence of history. The Roman emperors employed generally natives, Gentiles, to guard the frontiers of their respective countries from barbarians, giving them a station or castle, which is the origin of fiefs, and perhaps of the word gentleman. The title of baron is a Celtic or Greek word which signifies grave, strong, or heavy, to denote the qualities required for a public man. The French jurisconsults derive the feudal system, *feodum*, from *fides*, which seems preferable to the modern German derivation, which has recourse to an unknown word nowhere to be found, and the English term *fee*, an association of ideas hardly admissible.

Feodality and fidelity were closely connected. Condorcet acknowledges that it was an institution which appeared among all nations, and that its principle was only the noble relations of authority and obedience, protection and attachment, and reciprocal fidelity. If the vassal swore fidelity, the seigneur was bound to justice, and this produced "a mutual confidence," which as the old capitulary says, "ensured the common safety\*." Even Mably, so fond of isolation, and so ignorant of the origin of society, admits that the feudal system was favourable to the multiplication of families, and to the protection of a country. The conditions between vassal and sovereign were pretty nearly equal, for if the one lost his fief if he did not come to aid his seigneur, the other lost his sovereignty if he did not protect his vassal. The vassal, indeed, could not marry without leave from his sovereign; but this had only a political object. Thus St. Louis would not allow the Count of Champagne to marry the Princess of Bretagne, but on the other hand, when his niece Isabella was to be married to the King of Navarre, he first consulted his barons, and would not conclude it, however advantageous, till he had their consent. The ancient axiom of feudal right was this: "*Le sire ne doit pas moins au vassal que le vassal au sire.*" Sieyes, in the year 1789, speaking of the system of feudal and ecclesiastical property, says, "I can never be made to believe that this manner of securing the two great public services of society was more burdensome to the people than the imposts with which it is now charged." The ban and the arrière-ban is assuredly a gentler sound than the conscription. De Haller remarks that what seems shocking in the ancient language of selling a barony with the soil and the people, Leute, results merely from a too great concision: for the

\* Cap. Car. Calv. tit. 53, c. 4.



term *Leute* in the German tongue signifies those who live with another in a relation of habitual dependance, and who owe him services, and here it implies the mutual bond which was thus transferred, securing the interests of the people as well as of the new possessor\*. But men are indignant at the privileges which nobility enjoyed, and at the pride and selfishness of those nobles who monopolized all the advantages of society exclusively to themselves. Truly this is much if there be much truth in it: but are these reasoners aware that society in the middle ages comprised three classes, the noble, the free man or the ingenuous, and the servant; that the intermediate condition comprised an immense class of subjects who had possessions, and privileges, and a power in the administration, and that it was the majority of their voices which decided the election of the magistrates of justice and of the police of each county? We must not judge of the ancient magnificence of a city solely from the ruins which the chance of war, or time, may have capriciously spared, for the monuments remaining may not have formerly stood isolated and alone. The nobility possessed privileges, but what class of subjects had not also theirs? The fact is, that power being then under the general influence of the spirit of love and generosity, it became a characteristic of the times to multiply and extend on every occasion testimonies of affection and solicitude, the justice of which principle even as a temporal policy may admit of some defence on the ground of the permanence and solidity which this multiplication of privileges gave to the social order and consequently to freedom. We hear only of the privileges of the nobility and clergy, but we should remember that these were ages of privilege, when almost every man might possess

\* *Restaurat.* tom. III. c. xlii.

for himself some one or other. First, observe the privileges which towns enjoyed. At Bourges and at Tours, and other places, the office of the municipalities conferred nobility. There were cities and towns in which the citizens and townsmen had the privilege of being addressed with Sire, there were others in which they had a right to carry swords, others in which they might wear gold spurs, others where, as in the great forest which belonged to the state of Sparta, every one had a right to hunt venison, others which had the power of conferring nobility\*. The citizens of Loches had the privileges of knighthood, and in the Bourbonnais, the Duc de Bourbon used always to treat the Bourgeois as if they were knights. At Rochelle, the king had to take an oath on his knees before the corporation. Marseille, in favour of its merchants †, and in reward for its services, had the privilege from Baldwin II. of making enclosures in Jerusalem, and of having a quarter exclusively its own, and of being exempt from all toll within that kingdom. The students of the University of Paris had the same privileges as the clergy and nobility. Even to our time at Munich, a student of the university is an important person, who has his privileges: he is inviolable and cannot be arrested without authority from the rector: he can enter places of public amusement for a third part of the usual price. Boys on their journey had privileges confirmed by the ancient capitularies.—Where were there not privileges? Horses that had four white legs enjoyed the privilege of paying no toll‡. It would fatigue Homer to enumerate all that existed. Artisans had the privilege that their

\* Monteil, *Hist. des Français*, tom. III. 180.

† Deguignes *Mem. de l'Acad.* XXXVII.

‡ *Mémoires Hist. sur Troyes* par Grosley—*Monumens anciens et du moyen age.* Pancarte du Péage du Comte de Lesmont.

instruments could not be seized \*. In certain trades members were exempt from serving in the watch †. In others, they paid no tax on the goods of fabrication, in others, as in that of glaziers, and silk weavers, and workers in the mint, they were free from all taxes like the nobles ‡. In France, all states without exception enjoyed some exemption and some privilege §. Monteil, who seems to have studied every character of the middle ages but that of the noble, is careful to remind his readers that nobles on passing a river were exempt from paying the toll, but the injury done to others by such an exemption was certainly not great, and who now thinks it absurd that members of the parliament should be exempt from the postage of letters? Again, the merchants of some towns, such as Tarbes and St. Jean d'Angeli, had the privilege of exemption from all toll of entry or custom-house duty. Some towns were entitled to demand offerings from every merchant whose goods were carried through them: Libourne had this privilege; in other towns, the citizens had the privilege of being exempt from the burden of lodging soldiers. This was the case at Bordeaux. In France, painters were free and noble, and exempt from all tax and subsidy ||. Again, the Franc-archers, who were the finest men of the population of the villages, were no less exempt from imposts than the nobility. Poor men had their names inscribed along with those of the nobles as being exempt from levies. Monteil quotes from a parchment in his possession, which enumerates among those who do not

\* Lettres du Roi 1331 relatives aux privilèges de Salmes-ranges.

† Lettres du Roi, 1407, 1461.

‡ Lettres du Roi en 1470 relatives aux monnoyeurs, aux verriers, aux ouvriers en soie.

§ Monteil, Hist. des Français, III. 318.

|| Monteil cites Lettres du Roi, 3d. Jan. 1430.

pay in that parish, nobles, Pierres le Vaillant Escurer—Poures, Jehan Hoguet, and others \*. The farmers of certain abbey lands were exempt from taxes, as in the case of the abbey of St. Mexeut. The descendants of brave men, who had died of hunger rather than surrender their fortress to the enemy, were exempt from imposts, as was the case with the free citizens of the tower and castle of Evreux. The inhabitants of Montreuil-sur-le-Bois were exempted by King John from paying taxes or from giving supplies, on condition that they would maintain the fountains of their village at their own expense, a privilege confirmed to them by Charles V. and Charles VI †. On the other hand, the privileges of the nobility were often merely honorary tributes or affectionate symbols, and never excluded a recognition of the real foundation of spiritual equality which the Christian religion had introduced among mankind; there was no absurd attempt to disguise it, but on the contrary there was almost an affectation of proclaiming it; so far were princes then from reserving to themselves, and to such nobles as they chose to honour, the right of burial in the Campo Santo, the holy field of the dead, which had been formed in ages of faith, and blessed for all. The members of civil order used to eat with the king, and were called “conviva regis,” because the hospitality of the table had been always a sacred symbol of communion, and this was a privilege far more sensible than that now in use of mounting in the king’s carriage, or of entering the court by a private gate, an instance which may remind us of what was before remarked, relative to the consistency and sense of the forms and the customs in ages of faith, and in our own. If we look to the privileges which the

\* Hist. des Français, tom. IV.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. V. 69.

kings of Spain conferred on the nobility, they are chiefly of the same class. The king Don John II., to recompense the counts of Ribadeo, permitted them to eat at his table every year on the festival of the Epiphany, and the habit which the king wore that day was always to be given to them. The king Don Fernando the Catholic conferred the same honour upon the marquisses of Cadiz, granting them the habit worn by the king on the festival of our Lady of September, and he also decreed that the marquis of Moya should have the cup out of which the king drank on the festival of St. Lucy, and that the counts of La Ragne, of the house of Vera, and their descendants for ever, should have the privilege of granting exemptions every year to thirty persons from paying all tributes or impost\*. That generally regard was paid to justice in granting privileges might be inferred from that action of Charles V., who having one day signed a privilege which was afterwards proved to him to be against justice, tore it in pieces with his own hands, saying, "he would rather tear his writing than his soul†." If there were privileges which cannot be justified, it should still be remembered that they had come down from ages of great antiquity, when they were regarded as a compensation for services rendered and losses incurred in the interest of the general society, and that in later times they may have been often possessed by men truly humble and disinterested, and not conscious of retaining any unjust distinction. With respect now to the principle itself of hereditary nobility, which gives such offence to many modern writers, it is only necessary to remark here, that this was no invention of the middle ages, and by no means incompatible with the spirit of meekness which belonged to them. Wholly unconcerned with the general defence of any

\* Savedra, II. 101.

† Ib. II. 202.

political institution, candour would oblige us to admit that the French opinions on this subject indicate but little wisdom, and even an inattention to the most ordinary facts of human society. The principle of nobility is coeval with the development of the social state, and it is even recognised by the authority of the unerring text. When God threatened to punish the idolatry of Solomon, he added, “*verumtamen in diebus tuis non faciam propter David patrem tuum*\*.” The institution is also recognised, and in terms that lend so little sanction to the modern notions, that when God threatens a people with the greatest evil it is said in prophetic description, that “man shall rise against man, neighbour against neighbour, the child against the old man, the people against the noble †.” It is founded in the deepest sentiments of our nature. “The people honour persons of great birth,” says Pascal, “the half-wise despise them, saying, that birth is not a personal advantage, but a thing of chance, the really wise honour them, not with the thoughts of the people but with higher thoughts. Certain zealots who have not much knowledge despise them, notwithstanding the considerations which make them honoured by the wise, because they judge of them by a new light which piety gives them: but perfect Christians honour them by another superior light. Thus move opinions succeeding one another, for or against, according as light is given ‡.” The Catholic society of the middle age was essentially disposed to respect nobility. In the first place, because it paid more attention to the past than to the present time, in which it was greatly opposed to the modern nations, who, like the Ionians of old, interest themselves more in the passing events of the day. This Catholic society listened to the

\* Reg. III. 11.

† Isai. cap. iii. 5.

‡ Pensées, I. 8.



songs of Charlemagne and Roland with such attention as to give rise to a new term in language, although the ancient rhapsodists were not to be surpassed, if we credit Maximus of Tyre: for many ages after Charlemagne his praises used to be sung in public places, and streets, and at all fairs, till at length the inventions of these bards passed into the reproachful term of Charletan: it loved to hear minstrels sing of Arthur and the early nobles of its history; it regarded these recollections as its most precious treasure, and cherished them with a kind of poetic madness: Alanus de Insulis, a writer of the twelfth century, says, that if any one were heard in Bretagne to deny that Arthur was yet alive he would be stoned: it listened to these narrations with as much fondness as the Spartans used to attend to Hippias of Elis speaking of the families of heroes, and men, the foundations of the ancient cities, and in general of what related to the olden time. In the second place, it respected nobility in consequence of the example and instruction of its religious guides. The clergy of the first ages were men of singular refinement, practised in manners which had come down in the higher ranks from the old civilization; and often personally distinguished by a great nobleness of nature, which under the influence of Christianity gave birth to every conceivable tone and degree of intellectual and moral delicacy and perfection. This is even one reason why parts of the ceremonial of the Church seem so strange to the vulgar eyes and ears of the half-bred sophists in our societies: but it is in its relation with human and natural subjects that this characteristic of the holy fathers falls under our observation at present. "With him is extinct an ancient and illustrious race!" cries St. Basil in his letter to the wife of Nectaire. The saints you perceive, reader, did not disdain these considerations which seem so contemptible to the men of our age.

Even the austere St. Jerome dwells upon them. Thus in the beginning of his eulogium on the venerable Paula, he says, "she was illustrious by the nobility of her origin, but the holiness of her life rendered her more illustrious. Descendant of the Gracchi and the Scipios, sprung from that famous Paulus-Emilius whose name she bore, worthy heir of that Martia Papyria, who was the mother of Scipio Africanus, she had the generosity to prefer the modest retreat of Bethlehem to proud Rome, and to quit golden palaces for a humble and wretched cell\*." Even in proclaiming the utter vanity of all worldly honour, he shews how nobility may be converted into a source of merit. Paula was married to Toxotius, whose birth, he says, was no less illustrious, he being descended from Æneas, and from the Julian family, whence his daughter Eustochium received the name of Julia. "But if I speak here," continues Jerome, "of this worldly nobility, it is not because this was precious in the eyes of her who possessed it, but on the contrary, because the contempt with which she had the courage to treat it cannot be too much admired. Men of the world are filled with veneration for those who have the useless advantage of being sprung from a celebrated and ancient family. As for us, we only praise those who know how to rise superior to it, when the chance of birth has conferred this vain honour. Those who enjoy it are but little in our eyes ; but those who despise it become worthy of all our praise." St. Euchèr writes in the same style to Valerien : "although the high birth of your father and father-in-law have raised you to the highest dignities, yet I desire for you an exaltation a thousand times more glorious than this of your family ; for I desire for you not the glory and greatness of the world, which are vain and perishable, but the glory

\* Epist. ad Eustoch.

and greatness of heaven, which are immutable and eternal. Therefore it is not with the false wisdom of this world that I am about to entertain you ; but on the contrary, with that profound wisdom, secret and unknown to the world, which God has resolved from all eternity, as the apostle says, to reveal to his elect, in order to conduct them to glory." St. Ambrose, again, writing to Demetriades, a holy virgin, says, that though she has many equals in purity, there are few to be compared to her in the magnificent honours of house, and the splendour of a most ancient family\*. The recognition of a nobility of blood in France under the kings of the first race is proved by reference to the lives of the saints of the sixth and seventh centuries ; for the holy men who composed them speak invariably of the noble extraction of such as were of the higher classes †. And after all, however liable to abuse may be the possession of nobility, it is beneath the dignity of no moralist to recognize the utility of its principle as an assistant that may be given to virtue. There must be some foundation of truth in a respect so universal as is paid to all who resemble Camertus,

*Cui genus à proavis ingens, clarumque paternæ  
Nomen erat virtutis ‡.*

Though Euripides may be thought to go too far in saying, that every thing seems fair and beautiful in their actions ; yet history justifies a moderate presumption in their favour. It is possible that they may feel an additional force for a life of virtue, like Diagorus, whom Pindar describes as " walking constantly in the way opposed to violence, from knowing well what the just minds of noble ancestors have

\* Epist. lib. X. 84.

† Mem. de l' Acad. des Inscript. XXXVII. 547.

‡ Æn. XIII. 225.

inspired in him\*.” St. Odo, Abbot of Cluni, in the eleventh century, states in the life which he has written of count Gerald, that modesty and religion had been transmitted as an hereditary treasure in that noble family, which was a race of men in successive generations seeking God†. Even our days can furnish examples. It is the privilege of the family of the dukes of Altamira to proclaim the new king of Spain. On the renunciation of Charles IV., the duke proclaimed Ferdinand VII. the rightful heir, and not Joseph Buonaparte : for which he had to fly the kingdom, and his son, the count of Transtamara, to suffer a long imprisonment in the fortress of Fenestrelle. Honour and loyalty were hereditary in that family, in the same manner as the Spaniards said that the Guzmans were always good, and the Mendozas affable. No one need be told of the respect with which the ancients regarded nobility of birth. Dionysius says, that in his time there were remaining at Rome about fifty families descended from the most generous of the Trojan fugitives, who became the companions of Romulus, when he first built the city‡. This at least shews that antiquity of family was prized. Tacitus reckons among the dreadful evils of the most calamitous times of Rome, that “nobility and honours were considered as a crime§ :” and he furnishes a favourable testimony to nobility, in stating that when Regulus survived the cruelties of Nero, he owed his safety only to the circumstance that his nobility was not ancient, nor his wealth considerable||. It was not till after the reign of Louis VII. that the famous institution of the twelve peers arose in France : six of whom were laymen, the dukes of Normandy, Guyenne, Burgundy,

\* Olymp. VII. 87,

† Bibliotheca Cluniacens. 68.

‡ Antiquit. Rom. lib. I. c. 85.

§ Hist. lib. I. 2.

|| Annal. XIV.

the counts of Champagne, Toulouse, and Flanders, and six ecclesiastics, furnished by the Churches of Laon, Langres, Noyon, Chalons, and Beauvais. At the coronation of the kings of France the peers assisted, wearing crowns, and holding their naked swords, as may be seen represented in sculpture on the tomb of St. Remi, at Rheims. Such are a few of the observations that may be suggested with respect to the privileges of the feudal nobility, and the principle upon which that rank depended. There are yet other circumstances to remark in proof that it furnished no insuperable obstacle to the exercise of meekness, and to the general happiness of society. We have before seen how this question must be determined with regard to the condition of the poor. "*Vera nobilitas numquam superbit*," says a monk of those days\*. Gernando, the king of Norway's son, the proudest knight who joined the crusade,

——— who only vainly thought  
That bliss in wealth and kingly power doth lie,  
And in respect esteem'd all virtue nought,  
Unless it were adorn'd with titles high,

is particularly designated by Tasso as a barbarian, ignorant of the manners of Christian nobility†. It should be remembered, that the sort of selfish and disdainful men, who now cover Europe, belonging to the middle and upper ranks of life, rich, or at least living like the rich, excepting that they may have no gate at which a Lazarus may place himself, full of contempt for the poor, and proud of their own superior knowledge, which consists in an acquaintance with a multitude of little minute despicable circumstances, connected in some way or other with luxury, are a race wholly unlike the

\* Petri. abb. Cellens. Epist. IX. 7.

† Book V.

feudal nobility: these men have not any interests in common with the poor, of which fact they seem thoroughly convinced in conscience ; whereas it was always the interest of the seigniors to promote the welfare of their vassals, and to prevent them from being oppressed and overcharged \*. It must be inferred from a letter of Peter the venerable to St. Bernard †, that the peasants in Burgundy were then better fed, and consequently able to undergo greater fatigue, than the monks of Cluni, who were Benedictines, and under a most indulgent abbot, and many of whom had been great noblemen and princes. Sir John Fortescue, writing in the reign of Henry VI., bears testimony to the happy condition of the people of England at that time. “ The men of this land are rich, having abundance of gold and silver, and other things necessary for the maintenance of man’s life ; they drink no water, unless it be so that some for devotion, and upon a zeal for penance, do abstain from other drink ; they eat plentifully of all kinds of flesh and fish ; they wear fine woollen cloth in all their apparel ; they have great store of all huselments and implements of household ; they are plentifully furnished with all implements of husbandry ; and all other things that are requisite to the accomplishment of a quiet and wealthy life, according to their estates and degrees :” and though some would argue that this was owing to certain peculiar principles of civil freedom established in England, there is evidence to prove that in all countries of Christendom the same fruits were borne and brought forth in presence of the institution of nobility under the Catholic governments, which were every where else, also, “ politic and regal conjoined,” and which, let it be remembered, excluded men of

\* Lebeuf, *Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, tom. XII. 23.

† *Bibliothec. Cluniacensis*, 681.



no rank from their counsels, since through the magistracy and the priesthood, persons of the lowest birth were frequently invested with great influence, and virtually with a share in the administration. John Marot, in his descriptive poem of the voyage to Venice, represents the joy and peace which all classes of men in France, down to common labourers, enjoyed in the time of Louis XII.; he says, "you saw the peasants in their houses,

Sans crainte ou peur, plus fiers que gentilzhommes."

It was the pride of nobility to be the protector of the poor. Baldwin, count of Flanders, son of count Robert, was celebrated for his strict execution of justice upon all men of arms who dared to molest or plunder the rustic people. He inspired such terror among them, that no one would dare even to pick up a treasure on the way. However, one day a poor woman accosted him before the church of St. Peter, at Ghent, as he was hastening to vespers, to tell him that her cow had been stolen. The count begged that she would allow him time to hear vespers; but as she continued to speak, he threw off his mantle and gave it to her, saying, "by this sign you may know that I shall return to you after vespers; which he did, and satisfied the poor woman\*." Histories which relate such humble matter as this cannot be justly said to have overlooked altogether the interest of the poor. In the chant royal on the death of Duguesclin, it is not merely knights, and barons, and citizens, who are called upon to mourn, but it is said also,

Perdu ont ung vrai champion  
Li pouvre pastourel des champs.

Is there no other assignable motive but pride for

\* Chronicon S. Bertini apud Marten. Thesaur. Anecd. tom. III. cap. 39.

that resolution of nobility, never to make war upon the poor? In a memorable combat, when revolted peasants presented themselves with enormous sticks and scythes, brilliant squadrons of knights of Hainaut, cased in iron, suffered themselves to be beaten down, rather than draw their swords upon peasants who had no regular arms. Moreover, whatever may be said by the admirers of the Jacquerie, it does not follow of logical necessity, that in every revolt of peasants the fault was on the side of the nobility. Though the modern historians of France, beginning with him who pretends to describe the conquest of the Normans, can dwell with pleasure upon only two heroes in English history, Jack Cade and Wat Tyler, the true champion of the principles of Wicklyf, there may have been some justice in the complaint of the strange knight, whom Gyron le Courtois overhears speaking to himself by night in a forest, condemning himself for having used ungrateful words against true love, the source of his honour and joy, and comparing himself to the serf, who is of such evil blood, that if his lord were to confer upon him a hundred thousand graces, and a hundred thousand honours, and then afterwards were, for once in his life, to fail in fulfilling his pleasure, all the good which he had before done to him would be forgotten, and this one little fault, which he remarked, would be for ever after on his tongue\*. Pindar might have used in praise of many of the baronial castles of the middle ages the very words with which he celebrates the glory of the house of Xenophon of Corinth, a house which had thrice carried off the prize of honour; and besides this,

*Οἶκον ἄμερον ἀστοῖς,  
Ξένοισι δὲ θεράποντα †.*

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\* Gyron le Courtoys, f. xxxv.

† Olymp. XIII.

But as he sings elsewhere, "neither can this delight the mind of the envious\*." John Regnier, seigneur of Garchy, and counsellor of Philip the Good, left a remarkable testimony to the affection which he entertained for the poor peasants ; for being a poet, and composing his will in the form of a poem, when in expectation of death, after specifying the place where he chose to be interred,

Aux Jacobins eslis la terre  
En laquelle veuil estre mis  
Pour ce qu' aux Jacobins d'Auxerre  
Gisent plusieurs de mes amys :

and even the most minute particulars of the funeral, as that chaplets should be strewed on his coffin, which was to be covered with a white pall, and that his mass of requiem should be chaunted in high note, he continues,

Item, au moustier je veuil estre  
Porté par quatre laboureurs  
Qui de vignes seront tins maistre ;  
Car de telz gens suis amoureux †.

With this affection for the peasants, these nobles were far from being courtiers when in the presence of kings. The emperor Frederick I. passing through the town of Thougue, the baron of Krenkingen, lord of the place, did not rise from his seat, but only touched his cap, "in token of courtesy." Wherever paganism had been completely extirpated, the baron would not have been treated with servility by the lowest of his own vassals. "Poverty is not a baseness," said the Spaniards, "but an inconvenience." καὶ τὸ πένεσθαι οὐχ ὁμολογεῖν τινι αἰσχρόν, they might have added, in the words of Pericles in praise of their own countrymen†.

\* Pyth. Od. II.

† Gouget, tom, IX. 336.

‡ Thucyd. II. 40.

Meschinot accounts for the title of his book, *Les Lunettes des Princes*, in which he instructs men of all conditions, by observing that it is appropriate, although he offers them to persons who are not princes or great temporal lords but far removed from such an estate, pour ce que tout homme peut estre dict prince en tant qu' il a reçu de Dieu gouvernement d' ame \*. Thus one discovers in every point the trace of the same moral dignity which the Catholic religion had diffused throughout society with an equal hand ; and there are monuments still remaining in sufficient abundance to prove that by the action of the general feeling of the people, there was a strict and immediate fulfilment of the divine prophetic sentence, that "they who despise God shall be ignoble †." It is a remarkable fact, that the sentiments respecting nobility, which were diffused through all classes of the state, during the meek ages of faith, though they did not give rise to hatred and division between different ranks, were yet far less favourable to the pride of birth or riches than those which now pervade our disdainful literature, and even our proud population. Witness the instructions of S. Odo, the second Abbot of Cluny in the eleventh century ; and bear in mind who it is that speaks, that it is not a passionate orator and an obscure moralist, but a lover of peace and order, an abbot of a great monastery, and a companion of princes. "Worldlynobility," says this holy man, "is not the work of nature, but of ambition ; for Eve was formed from Adam in commendation of unity ; and he, though the greater, was formed without paradise, and she the inferior was made within it. And certainly," as St. Jerome saith, "we are all made equal by grace, whom the second nativity hath regenerated, by which the noble and

\* Gouget, tom. IX.

† 1 Reg. II. 36.

the ignoble are made sons of God, and earthly nobility is obscured by the splendour of celestial glory. Say, are the poor generated with more uncleanness, when even David lamented that he was conceived in sin? Are the nobles regenerated with greater lustre, when God hath chosen the poor rich in faith? Job reflected on equality when he did not disdain to undergo judgment with his servant, though he was a king; and lord Martin thought upon it when he waited upon his own servant and cleaned his shoes. Examine all the books of the ancients, and you will find that the most powerful were always the worst men: they were fattened by means of the labour of the poor; they had precious vestments and exotic meats prepared by the hands of the poor; but they only embraced the winds and trusted in vanity. There have been in times past men powerful, and proud, and voluptuous; but what have their immoderate joys, riches, and pleasures profited them? Where are those things, or where are they themselves? Go to their sepulchres, and what do you behold there but the fetid leavings of worms? They have passed as a vision of the night. And I wish that all the pomp of mortals were only to end in ashes and worms! but we must remember the horrible tribunal of the Judge, the burning river, the worm that dieth not, the fire of hell, the weeping and gnashing of teeth, and, what I believe is still greater than all these, the exclusion from the everlasting joys which are prepared for the saints. Let the nobles then be advised to consider carefully what is man, and before what Judge he will stand; let them behold their own power, and estimate their infirmity and the evils of their especial burden; that they may be prepared for appearing before that Judge, and that they may not be confounded at the last day in sight of the whole human race, and of all the host of angels and

archangels\*.” Perhaps after all, it might be a question whether the noble writers and orators of later times, who refer with such confidence to the spirit and sentiments of the middle ages, in order to condemn others for forgetting the natural equality of the human nature, might not return from consulting them under the impression that they were rather called upon to answer a little for themselves. Nothing is more difficult than to form a true idea of the character of the feudal nobility, if one consult only the writers of our own time, whose views and motives are so different from those of antiquity! With one, for instance, the mainspring which governs his pen is the love of aristocratic privileges, joined with that indifference for religion which the policy of states and the spirit of society, since the sixteenth century, have been creating in the higher orders; with another it is a hatred of aristocratic privileges, joined with an ignorance and a hatred of religion; with another it is an extravagant respect for aristocratic privileges, joined with a religious but uninstructed zeal: it is only in writers who understand and respect religion that one finds aristocratic institutions spoken of with respect, but also with freedom and discernment: and yet assuredly it is not of little consequence whether a just or an unjust estimate be formed of an institution so deeply rooted in European manners, and so capable of producing great effects. The injury which must be done to society by a systematic design to cover it with contempt was not unknown to the ancients, who represented *Æschylus* objecting to *Euripides*, that by choosing to ridicule the lofty grandeur of the ancient tragic muse, and by representing kings in tatters as miserable men, not distinguished above the commonest in language

\* S. Odonis Collationum, lib. III. Bibliotheca Cluniacens.



or habit, presently there was found no great man in the state willing to fit out a tireme at his own expense, but wrapping himself round in a ragged cloak, every one wept and said that he was poor, though he might have under it a tunic of soft wool \*. If men are really impressed with a sense of the enormity of pride, and feel a desire to contribute to its defeat, it argues ignorance in the extreme to be continually singling out examples of its operation, and denying that blessed meekness was ever beheld in the manners of the ancient nobility. As Peter the venerable, Abbot of Cluni, said to Milo, "It is not a sufficient persuasion to avoid pride when examples are produced of pride, since it is rather by contrary examples of humility and of other virtues, that the disease of pride and of other evils is expelled from human breasts †." In fact, if men were only to consider the present interest of society, it would be necessary to form a just estimate of the real value of these modern objections advanced against the institutions and manners of ancient times; and the only means of arriving at a reasonable conclusion would be by the study of all classes of the contemporary writers, who would as it were place them in the presence of greatness, and enable them to converse with the men themselves. In this manner I propose that we should now approach the noble society of antique days; not indeed with any other intention but that of removing the objections which might be founded upon it against our views of the meekness of the ages of faith. To this retrospect then, reader, advance without alarm for the result. And as we cannot hope to find men wholly blessed, perhaps with peculiar justice I may invite thee to accompany me in the words of Sordello to Dante, when they were

\* Aristoph. *Ranæ*, 1064.

† Epist. lib. IV. 8. Bibliothec. Cluniacens.

about to visit that second region in which the human spirit is purged from sinful blot, and for ascent to heaven prepares,

————— to the valley now,"  
(For it is time) let us descend : and hold  
Converse with those great shadows ; haply much  
Their sight may please ye.—————

And here, passing by for the present men whom we shall hereafter meet with in the schools, in the cloisters, in the hospitals of the sick, in the hostels of the poor, in the peaceful walks of poetic and devout contemplation ; walks that are with nobles of time past thronged as the ways of the rugged Apennine on an autumnal evening, when the crowd of holy pilgrims hastens to Alvernia\* ; there will still be found many who will justify our conclusion, that in the middle ages, notwithstanding all the instances of disorder and abuse, there was nothing incompatible with meekness in the possession and privileges of nobility. Mark first that long line of princes, and even warriors, who are acknowledged by their contemporaries to have appeared as sincere disciples of our Lord ; men who, as St. Odilo says of the holy Maiolus, studied to become meek with the blessed meek, that with them they might possess the land of the living. They are the counts of Anjou†. He who stands there is the representative of many : Odo is his name : one invested with much power, and yet a man of innocence ; for so he is described, "At ille quoque ut erat vir innocens, licet potentissimus ‡." Who is this that comes forward next in such pompous state, attended with every appendage of feudal splen-

\* The festival of the stigmati is in September.

† See the *Gesta Consulum Andegavensium* in *Dacher. Spicileg.* tom. X.

\* In tom. X. cap. 6.

dour? Can you pretend to claim him? It is Herlembald, a nobleman of Milan, who in the eleventh age from Christ enjoyed the golden light of day. *Erat nobilis coram sæculo quasi Dux in vestibus pretiosis, et inequitibus et armis, sed in abscondito Deo sicut eremita, agrestibus indutus erat laneis*\*. Who are these great promoters of commerce, these makers of roads and canals to benefit their country, to whom Troyes is still indebted? They are successive generations of the counts of Brie and Champagne†. Who is this with such an authoritative air of majesty? It is John VI. duke of Bretagne. Perhaps to the proud too fierce; but as Meschenot says,

————— Aux bons doux en couraige,  
Prudent en faits, et benin en langage  
Autant valloit qu'en scellé sa promesse :  
Oncques ne fist ung deshonneste ouvrage.

"The true father of nobility," concludes the poet, "may God grant him the inheritance of heaven‡." He who follows next in that train is Regnaud du-Guesclin, father of the constable: he was of Brittany, in the reign of Philip de Valois, and lord of la Mote de Bron, a strong castle, well placed at six leagues from Regnes. "Le chevalier," says the old chronicler, "fut preudons, loyal et droicturier envers dieu et le monde, renommé de grant prouesse et de hardement. Sur toutes riens aimoit l'église pour la reverence de nostre Seigneur, de qui tous biens viennent; confortoit les povres et leur faisoit aulmosnes: sa femme moult de sainte vie estoit et bien renommée en son païs§." Who is this with such a benignant look in death? Ah! you are already disarmed by their meek grandeur! It is Charles duc de Bourgogne:

\* Voight's Hildebrand, 123.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. XV. 69.

‡ Gouget, tom. IX. 408.

§ Chronique de du-Guesclin Bibliothèque choisie, III. 8.

whose last words to his sons admonished them to love and serve God, from whom all good proceeds, and that they should take care never to grieve their subjects, but retain their love\*. And he, who stands next so humbly? Lewis, duke of Anjou, brother of Charles V. “Douls, paisible et très familier à ses amis et à privé : entre ses serviteurs, si très humble et tout humain que plaisir estoit de luy servir†.” Who is this, bearing mortal wounds, who has both palms joined, and raises them in prayer? It is Drogon de Hauteville, who was assassinated before dawn, on the festival of St. Laurence, as he entered the church of that martyr in Montaglio. You may learn his character from the chronicle of Romuald of Salerno, “Fuit vir egregius, pius, strenuus atque famosus, qui propter animi mansuetudinem et justitiæ servatam equitatem omnibus dilectus erat.” He who kneels at his side is Count Thibault of Champagne, who though sick when the Marechal Villehardouin arrived at Troyes, yet would needs mount his horse and join the crusade, but his sickness becoming more violent, he died a few days afterwards, and was buried in the sepulchre of his ancestors in the Church of St. Stephen at Troyes. No one was ever more lamented by the poor. The monks said of him :

Terrenam quærens cœlestem reperit urbem.

Who are these that cling to the cross and cast away their coronets as things worthless? They are some of many who with the English Howards were in the first ranks of those who preferred the devout unanimity of the multitude to the proud obstinacy of a few ; and well did it become the blanche Lion to be

\* Christine de Pisan, Livre des fais et bonnes mœurs du sage Roy Charles V. liv. II. c. 13.

† Id. II. c. 11.

foremost in the warfare that was at once generous and holy: those who bear the red hand and the red cross are from Ireland, O'Donnel and O'Neil are they; chieftains loyal to heaven, who exiled in the persecutions of Elizabeth fled to Rome, and there left their bones, side by side, before the great altar of St. Peter's church, served by the Franciscans of Montorio. But we need look no longer, for enough is seen, and it is time to shake off the abstracted mood in which such visions would retain us. As one who, left alone in a hall of antique arms at the hour of advancing night, gazes with interest upon the shields, and helmets, and lances, glittering with pale splendour under the faint rising moon, and almost fancies that he sees the knightly forms that wore that steel panoply, thinks he beholds them pace across that vast hall or fall into lines to receive some high prince, or beauteous dame, so lost to the apprehension of present things must every thoughtful person who loves the meek and holy muse read these descriptions of the Catholic nobles of times gone by. Will you hearken now to the lessons which used to be addressed to these men in ages of faith? When you have heard father John de Avila you will have heard them all. "Remember," he says, in writing to a Spanish nobleman, "that in great lords who have authority over others, there are always two persons; many of these are good men in what relates to their consciences, but they fail in respect of being good seigneurs. But it is not sufficient for such men to be just as far as regards their private conduct; they must be just in their public capacity, they have need of double goodness because they have a double character to support. Beware, my lord, of not giving a good example. So great is the force of example, that I believe men of your rank will be found the chief cause of the ruin of souls. This should suffice to make lords live like saints. The more you will

regard and imitate our Saviour Jesus Christ, the better seigneur will you prove yourself to those over whom you have authority \*?" But let us hasten on, for now I tire not as before. Can it be possible, that the mere grandeur of their feudal castles should be found a grave offence? Well then, let us turn aside, and perhaps a visit to one of these ancient houses will teach us to be more humble. The castle of these ages, as every one knows, was Homeric at least in situation, being like the house of the rustic Eumæus περισκέπτω ἐνὶ χώρῳ †. If one who studies the history of the earth were to trust his own associations, he might suppose that like the men of primitive times as described by Plato, these nobles lived on the summits of rocks and hills, as if still afraid to trust themselves in the low lands which seemed more exposed to the great catastrophes of nature ‡; but without such speculations, it is clear that such a situation was agreeable and healthful, and moreover it interfered with no tastes or habits of life then prevalent, for Homer might have said of feudal nobles:

τοῖσιν δ' οὐτ' ἀγοραὶ βουλευφόροι, οὔτε θέμιστες,  
ἀλλ' οἳ γ' ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων ναίουσι κάρηνα  
ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι, θεμιστεύει δὲ ἕκαστος  
παίδων ἢ δ' ἀλόχων, οὐδ' ἀλλήλων ἀλέγουσιν.

It is not necessary to ascribe the choice of this situation to Cyclopean or predatory habits. In Tuscany and in other parts of Italy, all the ancient towns, like Fiesole and Subiaco, are placed upon the tops of high hills. In the times of material disorder consequent upon the fall of the Roman empire, the population of countries were often obliged to seek refuge

\* Epist. xlvii.

† Od. XIV. 6.

‡ Plato de Legibus, lib. III.



on the tops of mountains and in places of difficult approach. Thus we read in the life of St. Nicet, bishop of Trèves, written by Fortunatus, bishop of Poitiers, "In traversing these plains, Nicet, this apostolic man, this good pastor, constructed there a tutelary fold for his flock: he surrounded the hill with thirty towers, which enclosed it on all sides, and thus he raised an edifice where before there had been only a forest\*." Those who are acquainted with the moral elevation of the noble chivalry of these ages may, perhaps, imagine that in that circumstance they have found a clue to explain the prevailing taste in respect of this choice of habitation, and, perhaps, in some instances, the building itself, if it could acquire a voice, as Æschylus says, would say this most clearly. Petrarch certainly observes that Scipio Africanus was so adverse to a life of pleasure, that he would never even look upon Baia, and for the same reason he says, "Marius, and Pompey, and Cæsar, and others, who were of lofty manners, are known to have built their houses upon mountains†." The descendants indeed of those who led a castle life have very different tastes in respect of locality. It is not likely that they should relish the site of the Gothic castle.

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Enervés de mollesse

Ils se traînent à peine en leur vieille jeunesse,  
 Courbés avant le temps, consumés de langueur,  
 Enfants efféminés de pères sans vigueur.

They may shudder from their gilded barges, impelled by the force of vapour, as they pass along the coast of Northumbria, when they gaze upon those embattled mansions which the poet says were seen by the abbess of St. Hilda, as she sailed from high

\* Fortun. Carm. I. 3. 12.

† Epist. Lib. V. 4.

Whitby's cloistered pile to the holy island of St. Cuthbert.

Thy tower, proud Bamborough, mark'd they there,  
King Ida's castle huge and square,  
From the tall rock, look grimly down,  
And on the swelling ocean frown.

But if their fathers were again to visit earth, they might hasten from these modern Baias to inhabit their ancient picturesque abodes, without its being necessary to conclude that they were impelled by sentiments contrary to meekness, or that theirs was the crime of Pazzo and Rinieri, whom Dante beheld tormented in the seething flood for having filled the ways with violence and war\*. Even the two houses of Pliny on the Larium lake indicate a nobleness of nature, of which the modern rustic villas present no indication: he built one upon the level shore, but the other was placed upon a rock looking down upon the water. This latter he called tragedy, sustained as if by buskins†. The former was comedy, like all the houses erected in our times, in which there is nothing solemn, to favour sweet melancholy, and no part lofty or painful of ascent, requiring force of soul; whereas the very rooms of the ancient mansions inspired thought and feelings of devotion, and were a defence to preserve the mind in purity. There were indeed many characteristics in the architecture of the middle ages which seemed to have a relation to their manners; and first its beauty and durability merit admiration. Men consulted almost a poetic taste, and worked for posterity: the ancient laws prescribed a certain thickness to the walls and beams of houses‡. The magnificent old baronial castle of Glamis, the hereditary seat of the earls of Strathmore, is de-

\* Hell, XII.

† Epist. ix. 7.

‡ Monteil, Hist. des Français, tom. III. 253.

scribed by Sir Walter Scott as bearing signs of great antiquity in the immense thickness of the walls, and the wild and straggling arrangement of the rooms. "I was conducted to my apartment," he says, "in a distant corner of the building. I must own, that as I heard door after door shut, after my conductor had retired, I began to consider myself too far from the living, and somewhat too near the dead;" and he also gives a description of the castle of Dunvegan, whose turrets standing upon a frowning rock, rise immediately above the waves of a lake. Except, perhaps, for some tapestry hangings, and the extreme thickness of the walls, nothing could have been more agreeable than the interior of the chamber; but if you looked from the windows, the view was such as to correspond with the highest tone. An autumnal blast, sometimes clear, sometimes driving mist before it, swept along the troubled billows of the lake. The waves rushed in wild disorder on the shore, and covered with foam the steep piles of rock, which rising from the sea in forms somewhat resembling the human figure have obtained the name of Macleod's maidens, and in such a night seemed no bad representative of the Norwegian "choosers of the slain, or riders of the storm." But whether such was the situation of castles, or whether as at other times they rose from the dome of forests which resounded to the cry of solemn birds, or whether as at others they crowned the hill or rock that served as a citadel to towns from whose streets below a distant murmur ascended to the protecting battlements, their interior was always grave and spacious, and furnished many places favourable to retirement and meditation. Those vast chimney recesses, which in the fifteenth century were adorned with that noble architecture which may still be seen in the castles of Fontainebleau, Vincennes, St. Germain, and others, might be said to have a literature belonging to them,

and a school of taste, in which, judging from genuine principles, we shall find nothing to disdain. We shall have occasion to recur to this when we consider the learning of these ages. The decoration of these houses was thoroughly Christian, and this is a characteristic which deserves to be remarked. To this day the feudal science of heraldry rejects absolutely all immoralities, to a degree that would indicate the purest manners and the utmost spirituality of conception. Wherever to our eyes the principle of modesty might seem transgressed it arose from the simple reverence with which men read creation's holy book describing the innocence of the life of Paradise, and before the mysterious light of primal sanctity our ancestors thought that every polluted fire would be extinguished. In respect of its disposition to take a different view of this subject, our own age has no grounds for self congratulation. Plato even says, that at no very distant time from that in which he wrote, it was deemed disgraceful by the Greeks as it still continued to be by the greatest part of the barbarians, (that is, nations who had no sophists), to see the images of naked men, and that the Cretans first and then the Lacedemonians adopted the gymnastic discipline so contrary to this sentiment\*. Cicero quotes a verse of Ennius :

Flagitii principium est nudare inter cives corpora †.

Naked statues were not seen in Rome till after the reign of Augustus. One may conceive that the Christian society would be rather favourable to the ancient taste ; and accordingly the old mosaicks of our blessed Lady with the Child are always recognised by the circumstance of the infant Jesus being clothed. The crucifixes used in the time of Charle-

\* De Repub. lib. V.

† Tuscul. IV. 33.

magne represented our divine Saviour on the cross, not naked but clothed, and with a royal crown on his head, and nailed with four nails in the two feet separately, and in the two hands. The celebrated crucifix at Lucca and that in the cathedral of Amiens are in this form, as was that in the church of St. Cili-  
 nia, the nurse of St. Remy, at Rheims. The body, however, is not clothed in the crucifixes that were found in the catacombs, nor in those painted by Giotto and earlier masters, such as may be seen at Pisa and in other places. The chief decorations of the castle, representing the history of saints, differed not in this respect from the general tone of Christian modesty: those that were peculiar to its adornment were either carved representations of ancestral fame, as the silver tables in the palace of Dido:

Fortia facta patrum, series longissima rerum,  
 Per tot ducta viros antiquæ ab origine gentis\*:

or else heraldic blazons which sometimes recalled ancient virtue,

————— Veterum decora alta parentum,

and at others were the symbolic expressions of the piety of the founder or possessor. In the superb castle of Ecouen, built by the grand Condé, in the forest of Montmorency, the floors of several of the rooms are paved with painted tiles representing in each compartment the monogram of our blessed lady, and the ceilings represent the sword of Condé, interlaced between the initial letters of the angel's salutation and the beloved name. The walls of these castles contained beautiful recesses arched with rich tracery to hold the water that was blessed, and solemn tapestry flowed to the ground,

\* *Æn.* I. 641.

In whose glittering tissues bore emblazon'd  
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love  
 Recorded eminent ———.

There is little wisdom, and not more of taste, in the man who would despise the ancient symbolic decoration, even when considered exclusively in its historic and ancestral character. It is a sensible appeal in our great poet, "Will you mock at an ancient tradition, begun upon an honourable respect, and worn as a memorable trophy of pre-deceased valour\*?" Who could enumerate all the worthy deeds to which this imaginative science may have given rise, as in the instance of Perez de Vargas at the siege of Seville? Besides these decorations, the walls of a Gothic castle in these ages were covered with paintings, historical, theological, mythological, geographical, and so generally instructive, as to form almost an encyclopædia, in which every science and art was, at least, indicated. The ancient apartments and galleries of the Vatican were not singular instances of this mode of imparting knowledge. The castle of king Robert, at Naples, contained numerous apartments to receive men celebrated for their learning and genius, and there was a correspondence between the decoration of each and the studies of the men whom it was to receive. The apartments of preachers and theologians were adorned with paintings of Paradise, those of poets with mythological devices, and so of the rest. In the halls of the castle of Meudon were painted the sessions of the Council of Trent. In the reign of Charles VI. the castle of Vincestre, near Paris, was adorned with portraits of Pope Clement VII. and all the cardinals of his College, with those also of the kings and princes of France, and the emperors of the East and West†. The deacon Paul

\* Hen. V. s. 1.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, X. 16.



collected the fashion of the dresses of the Lombard warriors from the paintings made by order of Teodolinda in the castle built by her at Monza \*. The return of Cosmo de Medicis to Florence was painted in the hall of the castle of Poggio Caiano; and Tasso only describes a common practice, when he says, speaking of Clorinda,

Her prison was a chamber, painted round  
With goodly portraits and with stories old †.

In general the taste of men was directed towards grand and striking matters, instead of being confined as at present to promote the invention of ten thousand little minute objects of fashionable manipulation, exquisite trifles which have neither beauty nor meaning nor use, excepting as some contrivance to facilitate the gratification of personal vanity. In our times men fear almost to traverse these moonlight halls of knightly state, so little in accordance with the desires of luxury and the habitations of the effeminate; their very decoration impels men too strongly to meditate; they may admire indeed with Wilfrid, that huge old hall in the castle of Rokeby, when

The moon through transom shafts of stone,  
Which cross'd the latticed oriels shone :

but they cannot disguise their impatience to pass on; for they feel as if

————— By dim lights these portraits of the dead  
Have something ghastly, desolate and dread.

“The pale smile of beauties in the grave, the charms of other days, glimmering on high in starlight gleams,”

\* Paul. Diac. lib. IV. c. xx.

† XII. 23.

all that would have excited such deep and tender emotions in the ancient possessors, are to these men only sources of gloom and regret, objects only that they think every eye would shun. But in all the parts of these ancient castles there was some aspersion of religion. Its high towers were generally under the protection of the holy martyr, St. Pancrace. Thus at Fontenay-le-Vicomte was the tower Pancrace\*. The very name was often that of a saint. Thus the magnificent castle of Kenilworth was anciently Kenelmworth, so called from the Saxon saint whose name occurs so frequently among the students of the Anglo-Saxon monasteries. Often where we least expect it in visiting the interior of these castles we are compelled to fall upon our knees. Thus in the eleventh century, the castle of Harzburg, in the midst of the Harz, fortified by Henry, who placed in it the insignia and treasures of the kingdom, would hardly seem to have been a place to visit through devotion. It stood upon a high hill, and could only be approached by one way, and that was most difficult. The other sides of the mountain were covered with a vast forest which extended in one continued tract of solitude as far as the borders of Thuringia; yet in this castle were many holy reliques. The lords of castles were sometimes even troublesome to the churches of neighbouring villages, from desiring to transfer their reliques to the chapels within their own walls†. It must be remembered, however, that at others they came to the possession of such treasures in a way more honourable, as in the case of several noble families of Rome, such as the Mariscotti, Falconieri, Corsini, and others, having saints among their line whose bodies are preserved in their private chapels. The chapel was a constant appendage to

\* Lebeuf, *Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, XI. 104.

† Desguerrois *Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes*.

the castle. At the time when Hugues Capet was only Count of Paris, Count Haymon, not content with having built the church of St. Spire close to his castle, on the translation of the body of St. Guenaul built also the church of St. Guenaul within the very walls of this castle, which stood close to the junction of the rivers Juine and the Seine, and there he founded four priests to celebrate the divine service\*. The seigneur de Montmorenci having procured the reliques of St. Felix for the chapel of his castle, which was dedicated in 1174, such a multitude of devout people were attracted there annually on the day of his festival, that a fair was established for the time†. Thibaud the fair-haired, forester of king Robert, built the castle of Montlhery in which were two churches, that of our Lady, and the collegiate church of St. Peter, of regular canons having an abbot at their head. At the same time his son Guy founded without its walls the monastery of Longpont‡.

Louis Guibert, counsellor of state and Seigneur de Bussy in 1628, founded a chapel of St. Louis in the knightly castle of Bussy, assigning revenues for the chaplain, who was to celebrate mass every day in the week but one, and to teach the children of the village, and above all six of the poorest; and he was to lead them every evening to the church of the castle for night prayers§. The parish church of Andresel, in the diocese of Paris, under the invocation of St. John the Baptist, is within the walls of the baronial castle, which was a rare example in country places; but the Abbé Lebeuf observes, that the name of the seigneur of Andresel at the time determined them in the choice of the patron, as was

\* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, XI. 179.

† Id. tom. III. 379.

‡ Id. tom. X. 157.

§ Id. tom. XV. 34.

usual ; and after all, the seigneurs were the founders of most of the parish churches \*. In short, no seigneur in these ages ever thought of building a castle without a chapel, and in some there were even two. In the vast castle of Marcoucies, built by John de Montaigu, on a steep rock which stood in a deep valley, there were two chapels in the dongeon court; one, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, was built expressly for the Celestin monks, that they might serve it and be lodged in the adjoining tower, when war should oblige them to seek an asylum within the walls †. At the same time the episcopal permission to found chapels within private walls was always indispensable, and never granted without assigning specific reasons, such generally as the great distance from a church, the danger of crossing rivers, or the event of sickness. Thus in 1552, Anne Noblet, widow of Guerin de la Coustardiere, obtained leave to have a chapel at Cachant, on account of her advanced age ‡: and in 1617 John Tronson, seigneur of Coudray, obtained permission to have a private chapel, from the bishop of Paris, on account of the distance of his castle from any church. By the canons of the Council of Orleans, in the year 541, the possessors of chapels were forbidden to receive strange clerks without the consent of the bishop of the place. They excommunicate the possessors who should prevent the priests who serve their chapels from acquitting themselves of what they owe to the divine service. Indeed the Council of Chalons in the year 650 complained that some great men who had chapels withdrew their clerks from the jurisdiction of the ordinary. In the year 506, that of Agde found it necessary to make provisions against the danger of abuse, lest the priest might insensibly

\* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. XV. 343.

† Id. tom. IX. 271.

‡ Id. tom. X. 31.

lose the spirit of his order, and the lord usurp ecclesiastical power. From this outline of a feudal castle in the middle ages, one may conceive that no great alteration was necessary in the structure, whenever the possessor through devotion thought proper, as was not unfrequently the case, to convert it into a house for persons of a religious order. Thus Anne de Bretagne, wife of king Charles VIII., converted the ancient country-house of the dukes of Chaillot into a convent of poor Clares\* : and Charlotte, queen of Portugal, in our age, has left in her will her superb castle of Guadras to the Dominican sisters, on condition that they are to maintain a house of refuge. In the year 962, S. Guibert, a nobleman of Lorraine, abandoned his arms to serve God alone in his castle of Gemblay, in Brabant, which he offered to God, converting it into a monastery of Benedictines† ; and the Comte de Rougemont, the fierce and terrible champion of Savoy, being converted by St. Vincent de Paul, condemned himself to a life of austere penance, selling his estates to employ the price in charity, and changing the place of his residence, the castle of Chaulnes, into a hospital for widows and orphans. From all this too we can understand why even holy writers did not disdain to borrow similitudes from the structure and parts of the feudal castle, as when St. Theresa compared the soul to a superb castle, of which prayer is the gate, and which has many courts, in the principal of which God dwells ; of which castle the souls that enter not into themselves are as it were the sentinels, who only go the round of the walls without entering it ; and of which in the first lower cloister, answering to the first step in the awakening of the soul, all is dark and tortuous, and full of danger and difficulty, and infested

\* Lebeuf, *Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, tom. III. 54.

† *Hist. des Evêques de Senlis*, p. 360.

with phantoms and demons to scare one. F. Benedict also, an English capuchin, composed a book entitled "*Le Chevalier Chrestien*," containing a dialogue between a Christian and a Pagan, in which he teaches all the doctrines of the Christian religion, and inculcates all the lessons of a spiritual life by means of emblems furnished by his castle and tower, as well as his arms and equipage: indeed the castles of these ages being constructed on nearly the same plan in every part of Christendom, might serve in this way as a universal language. In Italy, however, it would meet with a new order of ideas, but even the palace of the Vatican, amidst the master-pieces of Greek and Roman art, contains the vast arched galleries, the solemn flights of stairs, the sombre Sistine chapel, the guards clothed in the striking and picturesque uniform of the middle ages, which all are in such harmony with the recollections of Charlemagne, who so long inhabited it after being crowned emperor by the Pope S. Leo III. In the fifteenth century, owing to the destructive policy of the government, many castles in wild parts of France were left uninhabited, excepting by some old porter who had care of it. Before the revolution, these castles were thickly scattered over France, and often within sight of each other\*. Eury-les-châteaux was so called from the number of castles which surrounded it†.

The huge old halls of knightly state,  
Dismantled seem'd and desolate:

but such was not the case with the castles or mansions in the middle ages, when the very word which expressed them implied the constant residence of

\* Monteil, *Hist. des Français*, III. 126.

† Lebeuf, XIII. 206.



the possessor\*. The Catholic religion kept families at home and prevented them from degenerating into a kind of nomadic tribe, ever wandering about with wives and children, like the Tartars, whether their journeys would be made in coaches or in carts. Here we may remark some particulars relative to the castle life which deserve attention. The feudal castle was Homeric, inasmuch as it deserved the title of "the well-inhabited house." Walstein in his castle of Prague entertained sixty pages, all children of ancient families, who were trained under the first masters kept expressly for the purpose. Froissart and other writers describe at length the immense households entertained by private noblemen of that age. Guizot affirms that a characteristic feature of the feudal system was the strange development of individual characters, such as might be expected, he adds, "from men who lived isolated; free to follow the originality of their nature and the caprice of their imaginations:" but immediately after he speaks as follows; "every one knows that the domestic life, the spirit of family connexion, and the high importance of women, were characteristic of the same state of society. The husband lived in the castle with his wife and children around him:" he observes also, that each castle became peopled with a crowd of pages and squires, who were sent there as to a school of chivalry. Thus the interior became animated; all these young sons of vassals became members of the house, and performed service of different kinds, and thus social movement and the communication of equals entered into these isolated habitations†. There seems then to be no ground for supposing, as he says, that this was "a solitary, sombre, or hard situation." In truth it is in our days, notwithstand-

\* Lord Coke says "*Manerium dicitur à manendo.*"

† *Cours d'Hist.* IV. 5, 6.

ing the multiplication of clubs and chambers of political debate, that men are doomed to the misery of an isolated existence. In no state of society were they possessed of more bonds of union, than in the ages of faith : no one was then condemned to a life of solitude, if he sought to be protected from the assembly of the malignant, and from the multitude of the workers of iniquity. The principle of association, so eminently Catholic, operated both in the highest as well as in the lower ranks of the state. I shall have occasion hereafter to speak of the morality of this society : for the present, I would only entreat a suspension of judgment. Facts present themselves in every direction to warn us from lending too entire an assent to the view taken by modern writers on this subject. Leopold, archduke of Austria, used to examine his own pages respecting their manners, and he regarded more their innocence and piety, than the nobility of their birth \*. St. Odo, the second abbot of Cluni, when a youth in the service of count William of Aquitaine, residing in his castle, and an attendant on his hunting, used to retire, as he says himself, on the vigil of our Lord's nativity, to watch during the night, and pray before the public office in the chapel †. The castle of these ages was not always as felonious as that of Nabon le Noir, in the history of Gyron, in which the good knight without fear was imprisoned in an iron-grated chamber, till after killing a giant who had been sent to dispatch him, he at length went mad. Sometimes it was an asylum for the poor. The count de Tendilla during one period lived in the impregnable fortress of Alcala la Real, perched high among the mountains about six leagues from Grenada : this was a place of refuge for the Christian

\* Avancin, Vie de Léopold d'Autriche.

† Bibliotheca Cluniacensis, p. 17.

captives who used to escape by night from the Moorish dungeons of Grenada. Often, however, they missed their way in the defiles of the mountains, and wandering about bewildered, either repaired by mistake to some Moorish town, or were discovered and retaken at day-light by the enemy. To prevent these accidents, the count built a tower on one of the heights near Alcala, which commanded a view of the Vega, and of the whole country; and here he kept a light blazing throughout the night, as a beacon for all Christian fugitives to guide them to a place of safety. An amusing instance occurs in the old *Fabliaux*, which is sufficient to show how generously the poor were admitted to hospitality by the lords of these castles. On a certain day, the story relates, count Henry invited all the world to an entertainment; rich and poor, nobles, knights, and peasants were all equally accustomed to receive his invitations; but he had a discourteous and niggardly seneschal, who took pains to insult the guests. A poor ploughman, named Raoul, became the object of his insolence, though the seneschal, fearing that the count might observe him, had at length provided a seat for the poor man. When the minstrels and jongleurs, who sat at the end of the banquet table, had exerted themselves to the utmost to amuse the count and the guests, Raoul advanced and kicked down the seneschal before the whole company. Then being called upon for an explanation, he related humbly to the noble count how his seneschal had treated him in a similar manner, on his first entry, though he came to the castle on the count's general invitation. The count was highly delighted, as were all the company, and to Raoul was adjudged the prize of a robe which was to be given to the jongleur that caused most merriment in the hall\*. Here is at once a great contrast to the

\* Bibliothèque Choisie, Recueil de *Fabliaux*.

gloomy pride of modern manners in the houses of the great. Sir Walter Scott takes notice, that “the union betwixt the nobles of La Vendée and the peasants was of the most intimate character; many of their employments, and even their amusements, were in common. Upon the evenings of Sundays and holidays, the young people of each village and farmhouse repaired to the court-yard of the château, as the natural and proper scene for their amusement, and the family of the baron often took part in the pastime.” It is not beneath our notice to remark that the same customs and delights prevailed with the great and with the poor. Both reserved their gayest habits for the same days of common religious rejoicing; there was not that anxiety in the noble to avoid the simple practices of the people, and to abandon successively whatever exercise or dress they adopted: on ordinary occasions, all were equally attired for the business of life. Montaigne says that he loves to imitate that cheerful carelessness of youth with respect to their dress, having their cloak only on one shoulder, their stockings torn, and many things about their person indicating a fierce disdain of art. A great deal of this may be ascribed to the circumstance, that there was no false or artificial state of social elevation in those days: of the arrogance and vanity of a timid grandeur we find some trace in Virgil, when he speaks of Drances:

——— genus huic materna superbum  
Nobilitas dabat \*. ———

There can be no doubt but that the higher classes in these ages sympathised far more with the people than that numerous race of men, who have of late been multiplied by the progress of luxury, who live by a thousand ignoble arts which tend to debase the

mind and consign it to sensuality, while they yield a sufficient supply of maintenance to enable their possessors to appear in a rank above the poor. The feudal nobles encouraged agriculture, which in the fifteenth century had attained to the dignity of a science, and was studied as such\*. The duke of Milan had magnificent stabling and sheds for 1800 cows and 14000 goats and sheep, as appears from the account of the voyage of Charles VIII. to Naples, by Pierre Desrey of Troyes. In the forest of Landea, the viscounts de Rohan supported a breed of wild horses. But to return to the hospitality of the castle. The zeal with which this virtue was exercised is sometimes amusing. Gyron le Courtois was thus invited by the knight of the tower. "Sire, il est bien heure de vespres, et scays bien que vous avez huy trouve par cy devant si mauvaise voye que vous estes travaille, et apres le travail se doit chascun homme par raison reposer; et pour ce je vous prie pour la foy que vous devez a tous les chevaliers errans du monde que me faciez or endroit une courtoysie que assez petit vous coustera. Et saichez, sire, que je la triendray a moult grant bonte." "What would you have me to do?" said Gyron. "En nom Dieu," said the knight, "je vous prie que vous herbergiez ceste nuyt avecques moy dedans ceste tour, il mest avis certainement ce saichez vous que ce me sera moult grant honneur, si si preudhomme comme vous estes herberge a mon hostel, et pour ce, sire, je vous prie que vous y demourez cesluy soir, car certes ce sera une chose que bien me donnera moult grant confort†." Boniface, the pious marquis of Tuscany, might be chosen as an example of the magnificent spirit of these times; though every feudal castle, like that of the count de Foix, exhibited something similar. On his marriage with Beatrice, daughter

\* Monteil, Hist. des Fran. III. 33.

† F. cccxxix.



of Frederick, duke of Lorraine, he kept a public table for three months, at which not only the noble foreigners who accompanied his bride into Lombardy were entertained, but also people of all descriptions. Gold and silver adorned the tables, to which the meats were carried on beasts of burden ; there were wells of wine, where every one could quench his thirst out of pails of silver. In the same spirit of magnificence, Albert, viscount of Mantua, made a present of 300 horses and as many goshawks, to the emperor Henry III. when he came into Italy. Nor were holy observances neglected amidst the splendid triumph of the feast ; as the minstrel of Branksome Hall bears witness, saying how

—— o'er the heron and the crane,  
And princely peacock's gilded train,  
And o'er the boar-head garnish'd brave,  
And cygnet from St. Mary's wave,  
O'er ptarmigan and venison  
The priest had spoke his benison.

The gaiety that reigned in these gothic halls was simple, and from the heart. The chronical of Alberic, speaking of the marriage in 1237, of Robert, brother of St. Louis, with Mathilda, daughter of the duke of Brabant, describes some of the amusing pageantry. At the four corners of the hall were minstrels mounted on oxen covered with scarlet, who blew trumpets at each service. Sometimes were introduced dancing dogs, apes on horseback, and goats playing upon the harp. And yet with intervals of this occasional merriment, there was generally an ancient Christian discipline observed which is now only found in colleges or episcopal palaces. To the moderns alone was the sanctity of the Christian banquet a surprise. The custom of reading during repasts came from the ancients. Pliny never neglected it, and Juvenal inviting a friend to supper, promised



that Homer and Virgil should be read. The Christians continued to observe it, only substituting holy lessons for profane. Charlemagne preferred hearing read at his repast the books of St. Augustin de Civitate Dei. Christine de Pisan, describing the table of the queen of Charles V., says, "durant son mangier, par ancienne coustume des roys, bien ordonnée pour obvyer à vaines et vagues parolles et pensées avoit un pseudomme en estant au bout de la table qui sans cesser disoit gestes de meurs vertueux d'anciens bons trespassez." This was the discipline to secure τὸν εὐνομώτατον ἔρᾱνον, a feast among men of ardent spirits, where at least there was no shoulder of Pelops to eat, where all was peaceable and well. With the ancients, indeed, there was often extravagance in their affectation of mixing pleasures with severity. The father of history relates, that at the feasts of the rich, after the repast a bier used to be borne round the hall, on which was placed a wooden figure resembling a dead body; it was shown in turn to each of the guests, with these words, "Turn your eyes towards this man, whom you will resemble after your death. Now drink and divert yourself \*." The heroic chants, as with our own ancestors, were the ordinary accompaniment of the ancient repast, and certainly far more useful than would have been any reading from their more formal authors, or conversations philosophical, such as that of the guests in Athenæus. A young sophist on being asked by his father, at supper, to take up the lyre and sing a song of Simonides, is represented as replying "that it was oldfashioned to use the lyre in order to sing while drinking, like a woman grinding barley †:" these pedants were all for sophistical discourses. But though there was no pedantry, it cannot be denied that there was much solemnity in

\* Herod. lib. II.

† Aristoph. Nubes, 1358.

the customs of the baronial feast, which bore no resemblance to that of Agathocles, the merry tyrant. The very hall was sometimes in a mystic form, as that of Tau in the archiepiscopal Palace, at Rheims: the light from long flambeaux, held by varlets who stood round the table, harmonized with nothing trivial; when discourse was held, it was often learned and philosophic. St. Thomas Aquinas sitting silent in a musing posture at the table of the king of France, at last broke forth with these words: "Conclusum est contra Manichæos:" their very dances were solemn, as when the king used to dance between two flambeaux, which were held by two knights\*. And here I cannot help remarking, that in point of taste there were many features of the ancient castle to delight and exalt the devout poetic fancy, without having recourse to the fictions of any absurd pagan superstition. Was it nothing that corresponded with such an imagination, when the strange guest was told, as he was conducted to his chamber on some wild tempestuous night, that the faint glimmering which he observed in a distant turret proceeded from the lancet casement of a holy monk, who lived a recluse under the baron's roof? Did his collected steps across the gothic galleries awaken no solemn thought? And when his spirit had passed from the earth, did the memory of him afterwards cast no halo of sanctity over the chamber which he used to occupy? Madame de Chantal, walking one day alone in the fields near her castle, had a vision in which she saw St. Francis de Sales†; and we have all heard how the old crucifix in the little chapel of the castle of Xavier, in Navarre, at the foot of the Pyrenees, had still a mysterious connexion with the great saint of that

\* Mémoires de La Marche, liv. I. chap. vii. an. 1442.

† Marsollier, Vie de M. de Chantal, tom. I.

house when he was in the distant regions of India. When St. Theresa came to Madrid, she descended at the house of the Lady de Mascarengas, adjoining the convent of the nuns of St. Francis, which that lady had founded. There was in her house at this time a hermit, who was greatly venerated, to whom she had given a chamber in a retired part of the palace. The lady was overjoyed at this occasion of making two saints known to each other. This hermit's history was remarkable. Ambrose Marian, born at Bironta, in the kingdom of Naples, pursued his early studies with such success that he became doctor in the three faculties of letters, law, and theology; he was a great mathematician, and at the same time a master of Roman eloquence: being deputed to attend the council of Trent, he was employed in negotiating several important matters relative to the Church in Flanders and Germany. The queen of Poland, who observed his merit, desired that he might be of her council, and he became intendant of her palace. Nevertheless the world had but few charms for him; he accordingly took the vows of a knight of Malta, but being falsely accused by two perjured witnesses of being accessory to a murder, he was thrown into prison, and there he took the final resolution that, in the event of his innocence being manifested, he would leave the world for ever. The examination disclosed the crime of his enemies, for whom he entreated mercy; and on being set at liberty, after accomplishing certain orders of the king of Spain, he retired to the house of the Jesuits of Cordova to follow the spiritual exercises. One day as he was looking from his window he saw a venerable hermit enter the church: he sent down to entreat him to come to his chamber. The holy man obeyed. He was the superior of the hermits of Tardon, and renowned for his sanctity. Ambrose questioned him respecting their manner of life, and resolved to visit their desert;

here he was so moved by the example of these devout men, that he finally took their habit in 1562, and being obliged by their rule to support themselves, he learned to spin, as affording the most humble occupation, and as at the greatest variance with his former glory. He was now at Madrid on the affairs of his order, being deputed to seek permission from the court for a new establishment. In some places, as at Ormoye, in the diocese of Paris, the curate used to be lodged in the castle of the seigneurs \*. In the houses in England of the old Catholic gentry, the chambers, and even the concealed retreat of the priest, during the times of persecution, are always found. One of the latter having been lately discovered in an old mansion, after remaining unknown for many years, there was found in it a table, on which lay a copy of the Imitation of Christ, curiously bound with old clasps of iron. But in the castles of the nobility, in ages of faith, saints and persons of holy order were generally most eagerly received. Thus when it was known that St. Theresa was to come to Salamanca, the count and countess of Montereï obtained permission from the superiors that she might be lodged in their palace. An old chronicle, speaking of St. Victor, a holy recluse, who lived in a solitary wood near St. Saturnin, in Champagne, records another beautiful instance. "It was a wonderful gift of God to this holy recluse and austere anchorite, that he should be so greatly loved, respected, feared, and revered, by the great men of his time, who were all happy whenever they could enjoy his presence. There was one gentleman, allied to the crown of France, whom he had held on the holy baptismal font, who resided at Cupigny, and who desired him earnestly to come to his castle to bless his family. After many pressing invitations the holy man at last

\* Lebeuf, XIII.

consented, and set out on his journey thither. All the castle was overjoyed, and the nobles of the neighbourhood hastened there to meet him, thinking that they would be in paradise to be visited by such a saint. On his approach, lords and ladies, sons and daughters, servants, old and young, hastened out to meet him, receiving him into their halls as an angel of God. There was nothing but rejoicing in the castle, and they wanted to feast him well, but the saint would eat nothing till late, employing all his time in instructing them in what tended to their salvation. After taking a slight repast, as usual, he retired to rest for a time, but at midnight he rose up, and sung his matins, and then meditated till break of day. This was a Sunday, so that a vast number of persons hearing of his being there came up to the castle to receive some heavenly instruction in the Catholic faith, to have the fear of God imprinted in their hearts: he made a long discourse to them, insisting, above all things, upon the love which we ought to cherish for our Lord the Son of God. After mass, to oblige and gratify them all, he ate and drank in their company, and then remained the whole day instructing them in holy things, and speaking of God. The next day, very early in the morning, he departed from the castle, leaving them much more sound in their souls than they were before his visit\*." The castle life was a life in the world, and many a dark and sanguinary deed has stained the feudal towers. I know it; but still, methinks, we have already wherewithal to support the opinion, that it was not necessarily *ὀλέθριον βιοτὰν*, a life causing death †, but that it was compatible with the character of men who sought to recommend themselves by meekness to the Divine mercy, knowing that it is

\* Desguerrous Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 123.

† Medea, 991.



only the humble of heart who shall be saved. Faith might have had her residence even within the embattled courts of nobles, and holy lessons may have found within them soft, obedient hearts; but if sad intervals did follow, when all was lost and all forgotten, if the knight who but yesterday at evening had listened to the benign recluse, who taught him "the way for man to win eternity," and had given proof how he did prize the lesson, by moistening the pavement of that recluse's chapel with his tears, if he, as soon as the warden's trumpet announced the beacon blaze of war, lost in an instant all remembrance of that dear paternal image, when

The blast alarm'd the festal hall,  
And started forth the warrior's all;  
When downward, in the castle yard,  
Full many a torch and cresset glared:  
And helms and plumes, confusedly toss'd,  
Were in the blaze half seen, half lost,

is it for the men whose days now glide luxuriously in undisturbed repose from without, to congratulate themselves on their superior consistency? These would do better to imitate that recluse, who had as profound a sense as they can possess of what it is to prevaricate with God. Far from breaking forth in disdainful reproaches, he only smote his breast, and silently mounted again to his lonely turret, to weep before his altar, and to pray.

But let us proceed to speak of the manners of the castle life. The pompous equestrian exercises which belonged to it, and the passions to which they led, may seem to furnish ground for the accusation of the moderns. We are told how

Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,  
Stood saddled in stable day and night;

that many, like the ancient Spaniards, prized a good



horse more than their own blood; that, in the case of Earl Morton, who claimed the horse of his bold vassal Gilbert,

The valley of Eske, from the mouth to the source,  
Was lost and won for that bonny white horse.

There is a worse tale still than this, which we shall hear on a future occasion; but after all that can be advanced and conceded on this head, there is no necessity for concluding that pride was inherent and essential in the habits which belonged to men, whose fondness for horses was their characteristic. They may have loved their horses, and thought them all worthy of being shod by St. Eloi; but he who is conversant with the noble muse has heard before of men lovers of horses, and possessing souls better than treasures.

———— καὶ κτεάνων  
ψυχὰς ἔχοντες κρέσσονας  
ἄνδρες \*.

The horse was not always saddled to bear his seigneur to the battle, or the tournament; it was often his companion to the monastery, to the cottage of the poor, or to the deep wood, whither he might repair, like Count Thibaut, of Champagne, to cultivate a sweet poetic fancy.

J'aloie l'autre jour, errant  
Sans compaignon  
Sur mon palefroi pensant.

The Church availed herself of this love of horses, and contrived to make it minister to goodness; for under her direction men sacrificed it during many intervals of the year, when in proof of penitence and humility

\* Pindar, Nem. IX.

they refused to mount on horseback; and for some capital offences the prescribed penance consisted in never mounting on a horse during the rest of their lives. This was the ecclesiastical penalty for some deeds of violence, and it was virtually a forfeiture of nobility, and of all its interests\*. The immoderate passion for hunting is advanced as an objection against the feudal life, and no doubt it was one of its peculiar temptations. St. Odo says, that when a young servant in the castle of Count William of Aquitaine, after continued days devoted to laborious hunting, he used to be frightened at night with dreams that indicated remorse†. If we are to credit the Saxon chronicle, King William “loved the tall deer as if he were their father.” John of Salisbury is delighted with the text that saith that “hunters ben not holy men.”—“Venatores omnes,” saith he, “adhuc institutionem redolent Centaurorum. Raro invenitur quisquam eorum modestus, aut gravis, raro continens, et ut credo sobrius nunquam. From their centauric banquets no one returns without spiritual wounds‡.” Justice, however, would oblige us to make some allowance here, in consideration of the title of the work in which this sentence occurs, which is on the follies of the great. There were sober hunters, and many modest and humble men hunted, and so far from being only second Chirons, the master of Achilles, whom Homer calls the most just of the centaurs§, some of them were saints, and rode through the forests with a thoughtful heart, and attended by smiling angels, winnowing the air with their eternal plumes. Romuald, a young nobleman of the family of the dukes of Ravenna, when he went a hunting, if he found an agreeable solitary

\* The synodical statutes, published at Verdun, in 1534.

† Bibliotheca Cluniacensis, 16.

‡ De Nugis Curialium, lib. I. cap. 4.

§ Il. XI.

place in the woods, used to stop in it to pray, and used to cry out, "How happy were the ancient hermits who had such habitations! with what tranquillity could they serve God, free from the tumult of the world!" Religion never sanctions an extravagant censure that is without reason or moderation. It is to be remembered that hunting in these ages was not always an illiberal, sybaritic, cruel amusement. It was not like the sport of him, alluded to by Dante, "who throws away his days in idle chase of the diminutive birds." The Athenian, in Plato, prays that the love of destroying winged animals, οὐ σφόδρα ἐλευθέριος, may never possess any of their youth\*; but as in many countries of Europe at this day, hunting was then a noble service rendered to the country, and one which was attended with danger. Tancred de Hauteville owed his first advancement as a youth to an act of courage and address in hunting the wild boar, whereby he saved the life of the Duke of Normandy. The noble,

Who had more joy to raunge the forest wyde,  
And chase the salvage beaste with busie payne,  
Then serve his ladies love, and waste in pleasures vayne †,

the youth who chose to remain at home and fight the wolves and bears, as Bayard's father said to his son George, who preferred this mode of life, may have been real benefactors to men, like the heroes of the ancient world: and though John Le Blond, in his poem on the chase, may go too far in ascribing to the temple of hunters all the parts of a church, yet for such hunters wisdom herself might deign to order the consolations of those Herculean baths, mentioned by Pindar, which the nymphs made to issue out of the earth, by order of Minerva, to refresh Hercules when he returned from his expedition into Spain against

\* De Legibus, lib. VII.

† Spenser, I. 6.

Gerion. The knights of Calatrava, in Spain, originally of the Cistercian order, living chiefly amidst great woods and mountains, were allowed to hunt and eat of the game\*. “*Omnia innoxiae remissionis genera breviter amplectar,*” says Pliny, “*homo sum†.*” And though we may smile at Xenophon when he says, that “*hunting was the invention of the gods‡,*” yet one must admit that it was a very happy combination when even amusements were a service rendered to society: they may, indeed, have been too eagerly pursued, as when the boy Ascanius used to wish that the foaming boar, or the yellow lion, might descend from the mountains§, but as a general exercise of the younger men, I do not think that even Momus himself would have inclination to condemn it. There was a literature belonging to hunters, as every one knows. Oppian, in his poem on hunting, speaks of the excellence of the British dogs. Ælian, in the second century, speaks of falconry which had been long practised in Upper Asia, though at that time unknown in Europe. It need only be observed here, in conclusion, that certainly, notwithstanding the inventions to diffuse a taste for literature, the lovers of hunting at present would be greatly at a loss if called upon to justify their contempt for their ancestors by composing a book upon their favourite science, which would have equal merit, as a literary composition, with a number of treatises written during the middle ages by various members of the feudal nobility. “*Life was not gross and barbarous in these castles and Gothic towers, as we might suppose,*” says a modern French critic. “*Many books of the time breathe a kind of delicate urbanity and generosity worthy of the most civilized age. It seems that almost in every period of the middle ages, whether by*

\* Chronicon S. Bertini, cap. XLI.

† Cynegetici, cap. I.

‡ Lib. V. Epist. 3.

§ Æneid IV. 159.

a tradition preserved from the old Roman society, or by the effect of a happy nature," (for religion is not taken into account by these philosophers) "some minds did attain to a high degree of moral cultivation." Of this we shall hereafter see abundant evidence. It would be foreign from the design of this enquiry to speak at length of the general manners of the castle life, but a few instances may be produced illustrative of their tendency to assume a mild and humble because a holy tone. The owners of these castles, however barbarous we may think them, at least did not always virtually admonish their guests conversely in the words of St. Bernard, that they should leave their souls without the house, and enter only with their bodies. Over the door of the great tower of the castle of Sévre there were inscribed in marble these words belonging to the arms of Longueil, "*Animas colentium te Deus rem et domum tuetur*\*." In the histories of the saints we are often presented with very interesting views of the interior life of great families in the middle ages. Thus we read that St. Theresa being an invalid in her father's house, he resolved to take her to the country house of his daughter who was lately married. On the road they stopped at the castle of Don Sancho de Pépède, brother of Don Alphonso, and uncle of our saint. Don Sancho kept them in his house, and would not hear of their leaving him. This gentleman was a widower; he had retired to one of his estates, where the love of solitude and the desire of his salvation enabled him to derive the greatest consolations. Holy readings, the delights of prayer, the innocent occupations of rural life, divided his time. It was the reading of some books on the spiritual life, which this old knight put into the hands of his niece, that first inspired her with the thoughts which afterwards enabled

\* Lebeuf, VIII.

her to rise to such a high degree of sublime contemplation. The very announcement of the domestic offices of these houses breathes a tone of devotion. Thus we read, that it was the duty of the porter of the castle to sound the bell of benedicite for dinner and supper, to keep clean the niches of the saints of the gate, and to keep their lamp carefully lighted. In his examination of conscience it was a distinct article whether he had ever closed the door against the poor, or against monks, or clerks, or brothers of hospitals who sought alms, or whether he had opened it to lewd singers and dancers, or to receive improper letters, or to persons of evil intention \*. But there is no occasion for our delaying any longer amidst these scenes of feudal life, compatible indeed, as we hope to have proved, with the character of the meek, but certainly not the most congenial with the loves of those whose eyes have been opened on the difference between things temporal and eternal. Perhaps we have already halted there too long: there was no Diomedian necessity that we should undertake to dwell upon the praise of nobility; we were not driven to it with hands bound, and the edge of a sword laid upon our shoulders, as was Ulysses when he was driven back to the Greeks without having gained the Palladium from Troy; but it was right to produce some features of its institution and manners in ages of faith, in order to shew that men might have been meek Christians, and have had the centurion's faith, though they had vassals under them who came and went at their command, and that there was no insurmountable obstacles in the circumstances of each inhabitant of the embattled towers, to prevent his being able to say with truth in the presence of God, "*Non est exaltatum cor meum:*" it was right to meet an objection upon which men at present lay

\* Monteil, *Hist. des Français*, III. 130.



such great stress, for they produce their arguments founded on the pride of nobility, like a tower which they keep constantly in view, *λίαν πυργοῖς χάριν*, as the Greek poet says \*; and after all, it is much to have seen that poverty was not then a crime in the eyes of the rich. We are incessantly told that some feudal towers were in the hands of nobles who pillaged travellers, and it is satisfactory to be able to answer that the roads and villages were secure and open for the wandering poor, whom no haughty baron ever thought of consigning to a prison for the general interest of society. The feudal noble, on the contrary, exercised that Homeric hospitality shewn by Nestor who received the two strangers with such kindness, although he thought in his mind that they might be robbers who passed over the watery ways bearing evil to men of other nations†. He was revered and even sacred whoever came wandering :

*ἀνδρῶν ὅστις ἔκηται ἀλώμενος ‡.*

It least of all becomes the men of our age to declaim upon the pride of feudal nobility. But, indeed, as for those who stand near the sweet mountain to inhale the celestial air which descends thence in the refreshing of ambrosial shower, the present retrospect may have been wearisome and tasteless : for how little seems to them all that belongs to the plain which they have left below ? To those whose eyes are ever turned upon the eternal throne of Him who has dissolved the crowns of many cities, and who will still dissolve more, for His is the surpassing strength §, what is nobility of race, what is feudal splendour ? why dwell, they may ask us, upon that piety which would have passed unnoticed with the

\* Medea, 526.

† Od. V.

‡ Od. III.

§ Hom. II.

poor? Why describe these brief distinctions which pass like a shadow on the mountain's side, or like a messenger who runs on his way? "*Transierunt omnia illa tanquam umbra et tanquam nuncians percurrunt* \*." Nothing was more dreaded by the early Greeks than the extinction of a family and the destruction of a house, by which the dead lost their religious honour, the household gods their sacrifices, the hearth its flame, and the ancestors their name among the living; but is it for Christians to return to these shadows of past things when all things are made new? Is it for them to search for glories which even this earth has ceased to recognise? It is a voice in Paradise which cried:

————— Mark Luni ! Urbisaglia mark !  
 How they are gone ; and after them how go  
 Chiusi and Sinigaglia ; and 'twill seem  
 No longer new or strange to thee, to hear  
 That families fail when cities have their end.  
 All things that appertain to ye, like yourselves  
 Are mortal ; but mortality in some  
 Ye mark not ; they endure so long, and you  
 Pass by so suddenly †.

What remains of the families sung by Homer, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Pindar? What of the race of Charlemagne, of Alfred, of so many families that shed such a lustre upon our heroic age, which gave imperishable themes to minstrelsy and knighthood to illustrious kings? Our age has beheld the extinction not alone of families, but of monarchies; it has beheld the principles themselves that give permanence to civilized society, and a value to the promise of offspring, erased from the constitution of a great people; it has beheld, and if only for one day there would have been matter for the tears of angels,

\* Sap. V.

† Dante, XVI.

indifference to religion, that universal solvent of all social harmonies, that fearful representative of atheism, that last heresy which is to precede the tremendous advent, not alone in the shop of the mechanic, not alone on the tongue of creeping sophists, but reigning in principle on the throne of Saint Louis.

We began by dreading to approach this subject of nobility: we only expected deliverance from the sea of this discourse, as Plato says, either by means of some dolphin coming up to us or by some other unexpected deliverer. Reader! thou wert aware how perilous was the passage; how only by yielding much we could avoid the shock of its proud billows. But say has the great difficulty been overcome? Have we shewn that it was possible to reconcile these institutions and manners with meekness? We only sought a chance for these men, and is this now granted? I am of opinion that we have escaped, and indeed it was a formidable danger. So now then I think we may glide on cheerfully, and hope "o'er better waves to speed."

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## CHAPTER VII.

THE last development of the principle of meekness which the present view of history will propose to our consideration is seen in the rise of associations among the lower ranks of the Catholic state, and this will lead us at the same time to observe what were the characteristic features and employments of that class of men during the ages of faith, when the people shewed forth the wisdom of the saints, while the Church declared their praise. The modern writers acknowledge that the Catholic religion has

been the origin of associations\*. “Ecclesia in commune orat,” says S. Ambrose, “et in commune operatur†.” The spirit of the Church is eminently social, and opposed essentially to that isolation which appears now equally as the source and fruits of misanthropy in men and nations. Wherever the modern philosophy triumphs all associations dissolve before it, and the state becomes only a nation of individuals, of wretched men, who have recourse to a system of desolating fatalism, in order to account for their position in regard to life, and to justify their hatred of mankind. Lo ! where stands solitary a sublime unhappy spirit that has lately passed upon the earth ; he will instruct us if we hearken. “I found myself alone,” it cries, “on entering the world, alone in my house, and I shall die alone. I am a being essentially solitary, not from choice, but from necessity.” In the ages of faith, it would not have been so with him. We have seen that the spirit of association entered virtually into the courts of nobles, and we shall hereafter observe it in fuller action in the great religious institutions which then covered Europe. It is pride which has dissolved the Catholic associations of the middle ages ; it is pride which renders men isolated in the modern states ; for each man disdains to be regarded as a member of any body which does not immediately of itself minister to pride by conveying a title to some material advantage, such as the reputation of science, learning, rank, or riches. To associate together to honour God would be a thing in their eyes ridiculous to the last degree, and yet to associate together with any object which does not include this, is only preparing a fresh link to that long chain of disappointed hopes which men drag after them to

\* De Laborde sur l'Esprit d'Association.

† De Off. lib. I. 29.

their graves. There is no alternative between the society of the saints, and the solitude of sin; an age of pride must be also an age of isolation. The middle ages understood that man is born for society; they knew, as Bonald says, "that such is the general law, that men receive from one another physical existence by generation, moral existence by language, and religious knowledge by communication, according to the apostolic words, *Fides ex auditu*\*." Human intelligence was therefore employed in directing the creative and associating spirit of charity to form those numerous colleges, universities, orders, congregations, and brotherhoods, which opened an asylum for every want, and a prospect of fulfilment for every desire of the human soul. It is with the latter we shall be now occupied. Tertullian is an evidence that these different fraternities were as old as the first days of Christianity with which they arose. They were instituted to facilitate the salvation of souls, and to edify the Church, in order that under the fraternal crown of the martyrs the meek might rejoice, and obtain for their faith increase of virtues, and might be consoled by multiplied suffrages. Such was that institute at Paris in the year 1168, called the *Confrérie de Nôtre-Dame*, composed of thirty-six priests and thirty-six laymen, in memory of the seventy-two disciples of Jesus Christ. In the year 1224 women were admitted into it. Such were also the fraternities of the blessed sacrament, of the holy name of Jesus, of the blessed Virgin, and others. There were others whose specific object was to assist the poor, to tend the sick, to bury the dead. Others had their origin in pilgrimages; those who had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to Compostella, or to mount St. Michel, entered into their respective fraternity in Paris. Others were established by merchants to

\* *Legislat. Prim.* III. 34.

draw down the blessing of Heaven upon their commerce ; such was the Confrérie des Marchands de l'eau at Paris, in the year 1170, of those who conducted the trade on the Seine. There were also fraternities instituted by officers of justice, notaries and artisans, all of whom had their respective patrons, churches, statutes, and banners\*. Great seigneurs in Flanders used to consider it an honour to be received into a corporation, or fraternity of merchants or artisans. At Paris the community of brethren shoemakers was formed in the year 1645, by the charity of the Baron de Rentè. He had already procured instruction for the poor inmates of the hospital of St. Gervais, and he wished to extend this benefit to the artisans, who were in danger of profaning the Sundays and festivals through ignorance and the corrupt habits of life which were then commencing. With this view he associated himself with a shoemaker, whose virtue was so well known that he was generally called le bon Henri. This poor man being thus encouraged, assembled some people of his condition ; and a doctor of the Sorbonne gave them rules, and they commenced their exercises. They worked and ate in common, recited certain prayers and psalms, and gave the surplus of their profits to the poor†. Similar associations existed in every country of Christendom, and in none were they more numerous than in our own. Machiavel describes the citizens of Florence as divided into numerous bodies of trades, each having rules and banners peculiar to it. A number of Lombards, particularly Milanese, being banished into Germany by Henry I., in the year 1014, in order to console themselves, joined in a devout society, which, as a sign of Christian humiliation, they called the humbled, umiliati. Professing to live

\* De St. Victor, Tableau de Paris, tom. I. 564.

† Idem, tom. III. II. 616.



by the work of their own hands, they applied to various trades, and particularly to the wool trade, and to the making of cloth. Returning to their country in 1019 they preserved their manner of living; they assembled on particular days in houses purchased at the common expense, afterwards united together in convents, where they worked conjointly. Down to the year 1140 they were all laymen; but at that time an order of religious priests was formed who did not work, but directed the labour of the laymen. The lamb was their emblem. Their rule was approved of by Innocent III., and by other pontiffs. They acquired riches, while their diligence and honesty caused them to be sought for by the government for various offices. In Como charge was given them of the weights and measures; in Florence they had various public duties. They furnished preachers and authors, of whom a long list may be seen in Tiraboschi\*. Unhappily they did not escape the degeneracy which accompanied the rise of the Lutheran heresy, and as they resisted the reform which the cardinal Boromeo endeavoured to effect, they were suppressed by Pius V. in 1571. In the eighth century these mutual societies and anniversaries in commendation of the living and the dead had been greatly multiplied. A remarkable instance is furnished by Bede, who, as a reward for the life which he has written of St. Cuthbert, asks in the prologue addressed to Eadfrid the monk and bishop of Lindisfarn, that he would inscribe his name among those of that society for whose souls after death the holy sacrifice was offered, that in testimony of this future aid he would give orders that his name might appear from that time in the album of their holy congregation. Many other examples occur in the epistles of St. Boniface. Briefs used to be sent from

\* Humiliat. hist.

one place to another, containing the names of the persons who desired to be united in the suffrages, and the laity of all ranks, as well as the clergy, were in habits of desiring this grace. Persons thus inscribed were entitled *Fratres Conscripti*, as appears from Goldasta on the monastery of St. Gall. The fraternity of the Holy Trinity was founded in the year 1373, in the reign of Edward III. The members were bound to maintain thirteen wax lights burning about the sepulchre in the church of St. Botolph Aldersgate, in the Easter time, and they were to make their offerings and hear mass on Trinity day. They had a common hall; their chaplain was to say mass every day in the year, winter and summer, by five o'clock. A dirge was to be sung on the Sunday night after All Souls' day, and on the morrow a requiem for the dead brothers and sisters. One statute of the order says, " gif eny of the bretherhode be a losed of eny theft, or he be an comm' contellaur, or com'n hasardour, or of eny oth' wycked fame, it is ordeyned that theii ben yputte out of the breth'hode." Taillepieu says, " the people of Rouen are so devout towards God and his saints, that to encourage and excite each other to live virtuously, and to recommend themselves to the prayers of the saints of paradise, they have instituted such a number of fraternities that there is not a trade or condition which has not one belonging to it\*. Some are common to all persons, as that of the blessed sacrament, and that of St. Romain. The singers have their fraternity of St. Cecilia, the notaries theirs of St. Mark, the lawyers theirs of St. Yves, the boys and children of the town have theirs in the church of mount St. Catherine, the jewellers theirs in that of St. Eloy, the poets and orators, the merchants, the butchers, the brewers, the cooks, and the tailors, have

\* *Recueil des antiquitez et singularitez de Rouen*, 58.

all their fraternities. The carters celebrate their fraternity on the day of the three kings. The mariners, masons, painters, fruiterers, shoemakers, dyers, bakers, porters, fullers, arquebuss-makers, surgeons and barbers, soap-makers, mercers and carders, have all their particular fraternity dedicated under the invocation of some saint, on whose festival they have a high mass, celebrated with a sermon and procession, and a banquet afterwards; besides every week they have one mass celebrated for them; and when any brother dies the rest assist at his funeral with lighted tapers, and the fraternity bears the expense; and besides this there is one fraternity for all the dead. The members of all these fraternities are commanded to do works of charity, to visit hospitals, to assist widows and orphans, to visit the sick and the prisoners, to bury the dead, to found sermons for the instruction of the ignorant. There is extant," continues Taillepie, "a letter of St. Paulin, bishop of Nola, in praise of St. Victrice archbishop of Rouen, in the time of St. Martin of Tours, in which he says that St. Victrice had announced the name of Jesus Christ with such success that the city of Rouen was celebrated throughout the world, and that in the West it was as much venerated for its holiness as was Jerusalem in the East; for as many came to Jerusalem to contemplate the holy places, so do multitudes repair to Rouen to contemplate the holiness of St. Victrice, and to see its magnificent monasteries and churches." These fraternities were even encouragers of literature. In the time of William the Conqueror, that of the Conception, in the church of the Carmelites at Rouen, used to give every year a prize to those who would make the best hymn, ode, sonnet, royal song, rondeau, ballad, or other laudatory poem, in praise of the blessed Virgin. A similar custom was observed by the fraternity of St. Cecilia in the church of our Lady, and the citizens of Dieppe followed this ex-

ample. Taillepié gives specimens of the successful pieces in the year in which he wrote his *Antiquities*. Charity and piety were, however, the chief objects of these institutions. The silversmiths sent a large sum every year to the Hôtel-Dieu at Paris, to assist the poor workmen of their body, and in 1399 they built a separate hospital, with a chapel, to receive such as were aged or infirm, and also widows\*. In every trade by the statutes of the fraternity, masters were bound to assist their workmen when they were in distress. If sick they were to be taken care of, if dead to be buried, if they left widows and orphans these were to be supported and educated, and portioned and enabled to marry†. In the year 1830 it was stated in London that the Ironmongers' fraternity were then in possession of 104,000*l.*, and of 3,000*l.* per annum, accumulated in their hands from ancient donations, which had been destined for the redemption of Christian slaves on the Barbary coast. It was stated that they could not find objects for their bounty. The laws of these fraternities of artisans were also directed to watch over the morality of the members; they were forbidden to live in sin. Luxury was prohibited, the necessity for which restraint is sufficiently remarkable, and the expense of their banquet on the reception of a master was not to exceed ten sous; but the members of these fraternities were to invite each other to their family banquets on occasion of a marriage or christening‡. Any act of dishonesty caused a forfeiture of all the privileges of the fraternity. Apprentices in every trade were only such as were born of legal marriage. The bastard of Arminhac holding his baton of marshal of France, the bastard of Burgundy seated on his

\* St. Victor, I. 627, *Tableau de Paris*.

† Monteil, *Hist. des Français*, tom. III. 315.

‡ Monteil, III. 293.

high daice, the bastard of Orleans proclaimed the deliverer of France, unless the statutes of every fraternity were changed, could not be received in any one of them. This is the observation of Monteil. There were guardians to watch that the workmen took their rest, and did not labour on days of festival, or during the hours of repast, or too early, or too late. If any master or apprentice was suspected of having any immoral connection he was to be expelled the fraternity, losing all the rights and privileges and claims attached to it\*. If Catholic artisans lived among Pagans, or among the Moors, no consideration of profit or esteem of neighbours was admitted as a justification for their exposing goods to sale upon a festival, an example which may startle some of London who now drive their traffic, though within Geneva's walls, where the quick flight of wanderers would furnish more excuse, it can be witnessed still. No master, or apprentice, or servant, was to receive or work under any one that was excommunicated. If any one were known to play at dice, or even at an honest game on the vigil of Christmas, or of the Epiphany, he was to forfeit his privileges for a year. In some places these fraternities chose a patron peculiar to themselves only within that neighbourhood. This was the case in the town of St. Denis, where the masons adopted St. Betesus as their patron, and assembled to celebrate his festival solemnly in the church of St. Marcel, which contained his reliques, for this saint had been a common mason of the town †. In all solemn processions artisans walked under the respective banners of their trades, representing the patron of the fraternity. Thus in France the silversmiths and founders, blacksmiths and cutlers, carried the banner of St. Eloy, masons and stone-cutters that

\* Monteil, *Lettres des rois relatives à l'homologation des statuts des differens corps de métier.*

† Lebeuf, *Hist. du diocèse de Paris*, tom. III. 219.

of St. Blaise, potters and tile-makers that of St. Fiacre, carpenters that of St. Joseph, glaziers that of St. Mark, barbers that of St. Cosma, brewers that of St. Amand, bakers that of St. Honoré, wax chandlers that of St. Nicholas, farriers that of St. John the Baptist, shoe-makers that of St. Crispin, drapers that of the Annunciation, weavers that of St. Arregonde, clothiers that of our Lady, silk-mercers that of our Lady-the-rich, dyers that of St. Maurice, tailors that of St. Lucy, makers of amesses, which were long hoods covering the head worn by women, and clerks and solemn laymen\*, that of St. Severus, embroiderers that of St. Clair, weavers of tapestry to cover the walls of churches and castles that of St. Francis, rope-makers that of St. Paul, paper-makers and book-binders that of St. John-port-Latin. The fraternity of each trade, wherever there was an abbey of their patron in their neighbourhood, used to dine there on their festival. Thus at Rouen the master brewers used to dine in the refectory of the abbey of St. Amand on their festival. Each fraternity had devotional exercises, and a church assigned to it, where the obsequies of every member were solemnized with great lights at the expense of all the members. These details may be deemed trifling, and an evidence of nothing substantial, but yet what a beautiful picture do they furnish of the harmony prevailing between the different orders of the state during ages of faith, of the consolations provided for the laborious poor, and of the restraints imposed upon the avarice of masters! From this picture of society we can understand how in a Catholic city the most utter stranger never felt himself isolated: there were so many beautiful harmonies, so many affecting relations in which he found a bond of union with all the persons around him, who all seemed to walk in love as most

\* Ducange, Gloss. v. Almacia.



dear children of Jesus Christ, and followers of God. With the young and old he might instantly have been united in some pious association, in the exercises of which he recognized their tender love for all that was dear and venerable to him from his days of sinless youth. How could he feel himself a stranger among such men? he could serve at mass in their common temples, he could walk with their children in their solemn processions, he could repair every evening to their pious assemblies round the divine altars, where like one family they adored their Saviour, and heard the exhortation of some meek man of God, who seemed like a common father to them all, who every day offered up the oblation of their lowliness, praying that it might be pleasing to Almighty God in honour of his saints, and that it might purify them in body and mind through Christ their Lord.

Another very striking characteristic of the Catholic society was the religious and even poetic character which the most ordinary and vulgar employments of the lower ranks acquired by their association with some sublime affecting mystery, the memory of which would bring every high thought into captivity, and dissolve the soul in a transport of amaze and love seraphic. These poor mechanical and rustic trades, which the ancients held in such contempt, assumed quite a new character; for besides that the Catholic religion, from being eminently averse to all singularity, while it respected the privileges of the great, left the affections on the side of the people, whose employments became therefore estimable even to the imagination, it furnished also particular motives for viewing them with especial regard. The trades of the people had been exercised by Christ and by his apostles: in the poor carpenter men would behold St. Joseph; and perhaps from some person of tender susceptibility the sight of his apprentice would cause

a tear to fall, a sweet tear of gratitude and devout amaze. A soft hallowed light was shed round every pathway of life, however humble. In simple shepherds were seen those who hastened to the stable on the blessed night, to give faith to Mary\*; in fishermen were beheld companions of those who were obedient to the call of Christ. Ah! let the modern sophists blush for their own report, if no pity move them for us. They may now compose as many treatises, as they have ruins made, on the utility of associations and friendly societies among the labouring classes; they will never confer a benefit on men as great as that which their predecessors took from them. These poor meek banners of St. Joseph of the Annunciation and of St. Paul, these airy unsubstantial things, as they appear to some, were worth more than thousands of their pompous books, and libraries that are styled of useful knowledge! With respect to the employments themselves, there are some observations still to offer. The primitive Christians, in following different trades, chose such as were the most innocent and most favourable to retreat and humility; and these were always subordinate to religion, which was the principal and, as it were, only business of their lives. Their profession was simply to be Christians: they avoided as far as possible all professions which engross and dissipate the mind too much. Fleury's description† might stand for that of the middle ages. Can we doubt of it when we read the modern books so full of disdain for what they term the depressing power of superstition, which acted upon them? It was deemed imprudent in public penitents to return to the mercantile profession, for, says Pope St. Leo to Rusticus of Narbonne, "It is more advantageous to the penitent to suffer some temporal loss, than to expose himself

\* St. Ambrose.

† Mœurs des Chrestiens, 47—50.

to the perils of commerce, for it is difficult to prevent sin from gliding into this reciprocal office of buying and selling." Deguignes speaks of religion being made a pretence for the pursuit of commerce; but it would be more correct to say that commerce was made an instrument for furthering the interests of religion. It was the merchants at Paris who facilitated the correspondence between St. Geneviève and St. Symeon-Stylites at Antioch\*: it was they who furnished St. Éloy with the precious materials which he was to employ in shrines: it was the traders of the Levant, who, under the direction of Popes, founded schools for the oriental languages which were to be employed in the conversion of the infidels. St. Gregory of Tours speaks of merchants of Syria who brought the relics of saints into France; of others who supplied hermits during Lent with roots of Egypt; and others were unceasingly employed in redeeming captives. We shall continue to meet with proofs that the vices of the middle and commercial ranks, during the middle ages, were at least not connected with the detestable love of sordid gain. The noble reply of Hegio to the captives in the old Roman play, spoke the sentiments which belonged not exclusively to heroic youths but to merchants and mechanics in Christian ages.

Non ego omnino lucrum omne esse utile homini existimo.  
 Scio ego, multos jam lucrum luculentos homines reddidit.  
 Est etiam, ubi profecto damnum præstet facere quam lucrum.  
 Odi ego aurum: multa multis sæpe suasit perperam †.

The old poet Charles Fontaine ascribes to his father these sentiments, joined with a love for literature.

\* Ball, Vie de St. Geneviève, c. vi.

† Plautus *Capteivei*, II. 2.

Loyal marchand; tel estoit son renom.  
 Dès son jeune âge avoit science acquise,  
 Qu'il estimoit plus que sa marchandise.  
 Toujours hautoit les lettres et lettrez,  
 Non les grand gens richement accoutrez \*.

But with this noble spirit, discoveries in the arts, the ἀρχαῖα σοφίσματα, of which Pindar speaks † as being taught by time, and to which Æschylus also applies the same word, were cultivated with a diligence and a success of which, as I remarked in the introduction to the first book, no other period of the world can furnish an example. Still, these discoveries had also a connection with some liberal noble and even religious end; they were all Promethean, not for the injury but for the immediate benefit of men. Far different was their spirit from that of these modern mechanics so cunning with their hands, like Sisyphus, πυκνότατον παλάμαις ‡: “fools,” cries an English writer, “who account themselves honoured with the shameful title of being the inventors of evil things, endeavouring to out-infinite God’s kindness with their cruelty.” The list of trades as set forth in a charter of Philip Augustus shews a great predominance of the liberal arts. Thus at that time the principal trades which formed privileged corporations and had kings of arms, were silver-smiths, workers of sacred ornaments in gold, coral, shell, jet, and amber, cutters of crystal and precious stones, silk-weavers, founders and carvers of brass, makers of lamps and chandeliers, weavers of tapestry, makers of crucifixes and images of the saints, makers of chaplets of flowers and feathers of peacocks, and along with these there appear only bakers, tavern keepers, makers of halberts and locks,

\* Gouget Bibliothèque Français, tom. XI. 115.

† Olymp. XIII.

‡ Pindar, Olymp. XIII.

carpenters, stone-masons, dyers of cloth, makers of bows and arrows, and those who ornament the guards of swords, fishermen, and saddlers, the last of whom, at least, Homer would have commemorated as worthy of the same praise which he bestows upon Menestheus.

τῷ δ' οὕτω τις ὁμοῖος ἐπιχθόνιος γένετ' ἀνὴρ,  
κοσμήσαι ἱπποῦς τε καὶ ἀνέρας ἀσπιδιώτας\*.

In the common estimation of men, the members of these different trades were persons entitled to respect, and many of them were even exercised by the companions of nobles. In the fifteenth century it was deemed no derogation to a scholar, bachelor, master of arts, or one entitled "honourable" to be a printer and bookseller †. Every thing relative to men was raised in dignity by the principles of the Catholic religion; for meekness in manners was not an hypocrisy, but the manly expression of a sincere conviction. To these various professions I shall only add, as forming a curious and truly Homeric personage of the middle ages, the office of a messenger, to which Monteil has done full justice. There was the messenger of the university, the flying messenger, who could speak Latin, and who used to sing his hours as he rode along, "par monts et par vaux." Even gentlemen used to charge themselves with messages and letters, travelling night and day to serve great lords and others. There was the feudal messenger, the messenger of men of arms who had to ride from castle to castle; there were foot messengers, town messengers, and church messengers. In 1464 posts were established in France, which proved fatal to this profession. Before that time the conveyance of letters and paquets belonged almost every where to the

\* II. II. 552.

† L'imprimerie par La Caille XV. Siècle.

universities. That of Paris had at least 100 messengers under its orders. But on the whole it is to be remembered, that the religious and poetical character of these ages was unfavourable to many branches of industry which now may appear to flourish, even under the circumstances of a state of continued concealed or open war between the masters and their labourers. The race of men who seem to have no conception of moral and social perfection beyond what is implied in the smoke of a steam engine, did not then exist. Men exercised themselves in honest and useful employments, but not with an insatiable thirst for gold and a heart hardened against the harmonies of life, against the associations of poetry, against the movement of humanity, and the inspirations of religion. Neither in their intellectual nor bodily discipline did they resemble the heretical race who, as they inquire for the sake of inquiry, so do they seem to labour for the sake of labour. "We are called to liberty," they might have said, "and we desire not to sacrifice the whole of our time about interests of money, in which there is no companionship: we require intervals of leisure for our religious exercises, for the festivals of the Church, for the recreation of our minds, for the improvement of our various intellectual powers. In this we give no just cause of offence for any one to condemn our faith, if he also respects it; but if he will only hearken to arguments drawn from natural reason he must admit that this is a question of which, as far as respects ourselves, we are the best judges, and we will therefore give him his dismissal in the words of Plato: οὐδέν γε δεινὸν ποιούμεν, κρίνοντες τὸν Ἀπόλλω καὶ τὰ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος ὄργανα πρὸ Μαρσύου τε καὶ τῶν ἐκείνου ὀργάνων\*."

The various civil dignitaries of the social order



during the ages of faith have now passed before us in all their relations; we have beheld the ancient magistrates, counsellors, nobles, and kings; it would be unjust to pass on without taking notice of the humble members of a Catholic state, upon whose character the history of Christian associations has already thrown such light, and in whose manners there will be found so much to interest the historian and the philosophic observer of mankind; but as it would be difficult to make a selection from such a multitude of examples as present themselves incidentally in history to the mind of accurate and reflecting readers, it will, perhaps, be sufficient to choose one of whose life we have the most curious details given by a very ancient writer, himself a saint, and in whose manners we can behold not only the singular merit which has entitled him to the veneration of the Church, but also the general tone and habits which belonged during these ages, in some degree or other, to a multitude of persons who trod the same paths with him. Eligius or Eloy, says his contemporary St. Ouen, born of devout parents, at Limoges, was placed as an apprentice to "an honourable man, by name Abbo, who was a silversmith and kept a public shop! He was a pious youth and very skilful in whatever he undertook; he used diligently to assist at the divine offices in the churches, and whatever he heard there used to be the subject of his meditation when he returned home. He became known to king Clotaire, who gave him abundance of employment; and on the death of this king, his son and successor, king Dagobert, treated Eligius with no less kindness. His integrity and diligence, his piety and meekness, his charity and mortification, were beyond all description. While at work, he had always some holy page open before him, that his mind as well as his hands might be well employed. His fame was so

spread that whenever strangers from Italy or Gothland came to the royal palace, they would first pay a visit to Eligius; and also holy men and poor people and monks used to come to him in crowds. His great desire was to redeem captives" (we have seen what zeal was evinced in this respect by the fraternity in London of Ironmongers), "and sometimes he used to deliver at once as many as thirty, and fifty, and even one hundred; for ships used often to arrive with that number on board of Romans, or Gauls, or Britons, or even of Moors, but especially of Saxons; who at that time used to be carried off from their country in whole droves like cattle;" (for paganism had still great power, and the inhabitants of the sea coasts were for the most part pagans) "and if his money failed he would give his clothes, or his food, his belt, or his shoes to redeem them. He used to give these redeemed captives the choice of three things. If they wished to return to their own country, he would supply them with means to regain it. If they wished to remain where they were, he undertook to provide for them, so that they should live, not as slaves, but as his own brethren. If he could persuade them to engage in the monastic life, he treated them as his lords, and supplied them with what was necessary. He had many holy laymen living with him in his house. When any stranger asked for his house, 'go into such a street,' he would be told, 'and where you will see a number of poor people there you will find his door.' He used to send out his servant to seek for poor strangers to invite them to hospitality, and he used to serve them with his own hands. The king and rich men used often to send him bread and other necessities, which he used to distribute to the poor. He used to pray and sing Psalms during the night, keeping vigils, and if the king would send for him suddenly he would never go until he had fulfilled his

service to Christ. Being sent on a journey into Britain, he gave large alms on his way, for his thoughts always rested on the sentence of the apostle, 'Habentes victum et vestitum, his contenti simus; nam qui volunt divites fieri, incidunt in tentationem et laqueum diaboli.' Having obtained a villa from the king, he built a monastery on it, and whatever property was given to him he destined to support it. Here were many religious who were skilled in arts. It was a fertile and agreeable spot, so beautiful that when any one tarried there, finding himself among gardens and groves of apple, he might exclaim, 'quam bonæ domus tuæ, Jacob,' et 'quam pulchra tabernacula tua Israel!' like the shadowy woods, like the cedar near the waters, like a Paradise on the river's bank. 'Habitacula justorum benedicentur.' It is surrounded with a ditch and a hedge, and comprises a space of ten stadia, by the side of a river, with a mountain crowning it, covered with wood and breaking out into steep rocks, while the whole space is full of fruit trees. Thus the mind is refreshed, and may congratulate itself in enjoying in some measure the sweets of Paradise. Moreover, he built a Xenodochium in the city of Paris for poor maidens: he built also and restored several churches, and covered them with lead. Thus was he bountiful in alms, sedulous in watching, devout in prayer, perfect in charity, profound in humility, excellent in doctrine, ready in speech, most holy in conversation, bound by no chains to the world, active in ministering to the servants of God, solicitous to redeem captives, brave in suffering hardships, cheerful in good works, generous in hospitality. Nothing could be more clement than his mind, nothing sweeter than his severity, 'Nihil risu gravius, nihil prorsus tristia suavius.' Under a laic habit he had a mellifluous doctrine from God filled with the Holy Spirit, with the desire of Christ, and of eternal

happiness, and being forgetful of secular dignities, he had all his conversation with the poor, and with monks, '*omne consortium cum egenis haberet et monachis.*' Though monks used to flock to him, yet he was never satiated with their conversation, so that he would often repair to divers solemn monasteries. Who could describe with what devotion, with what humility he would enter the monastery and walk among the brethren! It was his custom on a journey, if he knew that the same night he could visit a monastery or a church, or any religious man, he would never take food till he arrived there, and the last three or four miles he would go on foot, and then would he eat their eulogia fasting. This blessed man among other good works made a great number of rich shrines composed of gold, and silver, and precious stones; as those of Germanus, Severinus, Quintinus, Genoveva, Columban, Maximian, and above all of the blessed Martin of Tours: king Dagobert was at the expense of the materials. Also he made the mausoleum of St. Denis, at Paris, and adorned the altars and the doors with silver metal. This was the time when heresy afflicted the empire, and many heretics came into Gaul. Eligius reclaimed several of them, '*erat enim ipse in studio Scripturarum subtilissimus,*' and being himself sufficiently instructed he went about among the people with evangelical exhortations, teaching them to persevere irrevocably in the faith of Christ, and to beware of the contagion of the heretics: he was subject to the king, and devout to Christ; he prayed frequently, according to the apostle, for kings and for those who are in high station, that men might lead a quiet and tranquil life in all piety and charity. So that under the laic habit he possessed the priestly grace, an indication of his future destiny. O what a perfect layman, whom priests themselves might desire to imitate! O mind worthy of being celebrated by

all to whom to live was only Christ, only to fear him with love, and to love him with fear! O happy foe to this world, to whom the world was crucified, as was he to the world \*!" Here concludes that part of the life of this saintly man which was spent in the exercise of his humble trade: henceforth he goes on to greater blessedness, but as occasion is not given us now to view the graces of his ecclesiastical life, we shall take leave of him for the present with submissive reverence, although with the earnest hope that we shall meet again in the cloisters of Noyon.

Such then are a few of the leading facts presented in this history, of the associations and employments of the middle and lowest ranks of society during the ages of faith. Perhaps the prospect held out to the reader in the commencement of this path was not inviting, but it seems indeed to have supplied much that may give us pause if pondered fittingly. It was impossible to impart dignity to such a subject, and to speak of the most ordinary trades in a manner that would prove agreeable seemed difficult; but although Callimachus might turn away in contempt, our offering is, as it were, a Cyclic rhapsody which can omit mention of nothing however little or common, and it appears as if in this instance it has made us acquainted with circumstances and with personages, such as no one meekly wise can reasonably disdain. The truth is, that the Catholic religion enjoys that privilege which belongs, in a lower degree, to genius, of ennobling what to us without it appears common, and beautiful is every path on which its light has shone. But henceforth, reader, be assured my theme will rise, for this humble pathway has conducted us to the confines of that happy earth, the pledge and earnest of eternal peace which the meek do now inherit. We

\* Vita Sancti Eligii Episcop. S. Audœni auct. apud Dacher. Spicilegium, tom. V.

from this stage of our course proceed like those who journey over a plain, gazing intent through the evening sky upon some noble mountains crowned with holy towers, the object of their vow, which stretch in purple splendour against the bright vespertine ray. But here must we pause awhile and gather strength as wearied men halt when they first gain sight of home. A short space separates us from the realm of joy ; if no interruption should occur to our remaining enterprise, I shall in the next book endeavour to trace its shadowed form, and set it forth to view.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

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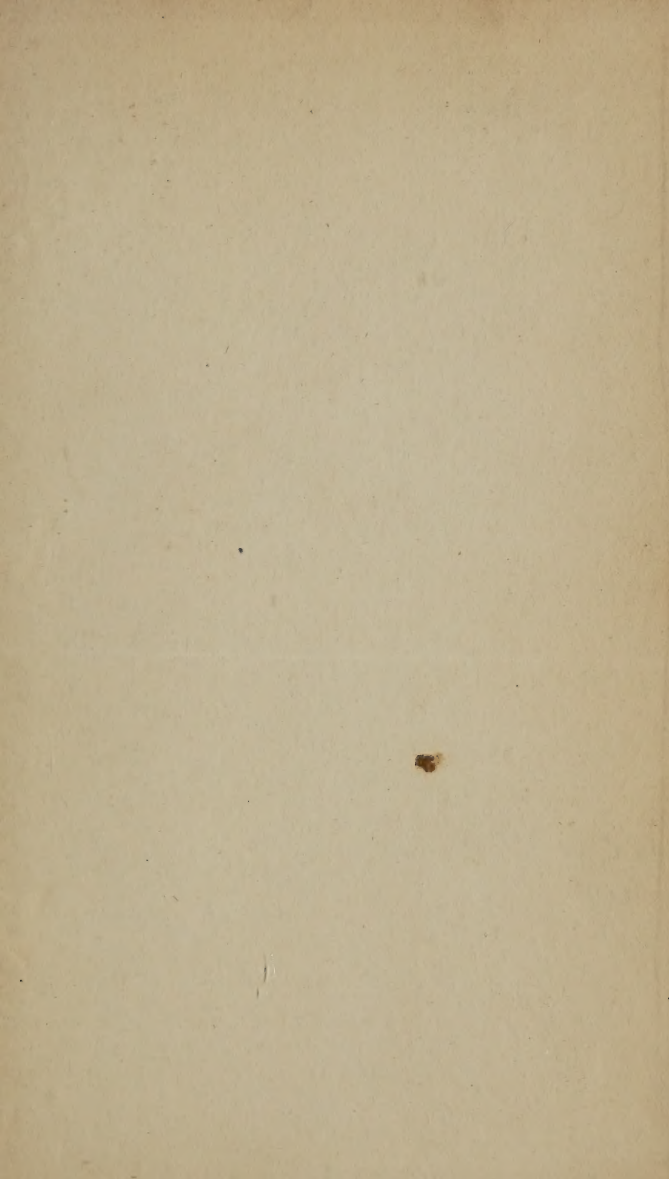
### ERRATA.

- Page 87, *for* "who have," *read* "to have."  
— 133, *for* "which that," *read* "with that."  
— 170, *for* "necessities," *read* "spiritual necessities."









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